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FIRST THINGS

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JOHN PAUL II AND THE PRIORITY OF CULTURE
George Weigel

WHEN EVERYTHING IS PERMITTED
Wolfhart Pannenberg

THE SCHOOL OF SANCTIFICATION
John J. Haldane

WOMEN OF RENEWAL
A STATEMENT

ALSO: Islamic Encounters · James Nuechterlein on the Fifties
Jean Duchesne: Letter from Paris · R. R. Reno: Good Restaurants in Gomorrah · Russell E. Saltzman: A Fear of Abandonment
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Richard John Neuhaus
The Public Square
A Continuing Survey of Religion and Public Life

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Richard John Neuhaus
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Darwinism as Science and Philosophy

I am pleased that you published the essay by Phillip E. Johnson entitled "The Unraveling of Scientific Materialism" (November 1997), because now I can understand exactly what Mr. Johnson's quarrel with evolutionary theory in general, and with Darwinism in particular, is based on. He makes a basic mistake about what necessary relation a scientific hypothesis might have to a particular ontology—in this case, to the ontology he calls "materialism." Mr. Johnson's idea—that "Darwinism is based on an a priori commitment to materialism, not on a philosophically neutral assessment of the evidence"—is simply wrong.

Neither evolutionary theory nor any other scientific hypothesis has any necessary relation to any particular ontology. Scientific hypotheses are physical statements, not metaphysical ones. They concern only the analysis, prediction, and retrodiction (explanation) of the phenomena of nature, and can in no case pass beyond such phenomena to any kind of "ultimate reality," or to "things in themselves" (as Kant put it). . . .

Lewis Beck's comment that "anyone who could believe in God could believe in anything" need not be the case for someone who has adopted, say, the Thomist metaphysics, in which grace is seen as completing nature, but never as coercing it. This would be an example of an ontology that is (or at least aims to be) compatible with the "standard model" of the world furnished us by modern science. Similarly, Pope John Paul II's recent comments on evolutionary theory can be seen as accepting evolution as a correct description of the system of natural phenomena that we observe, without considering such theories to extend to the matter of the authorship of that system.

I should add that I myself am exactly the kind of atheist and materialist that Mr. Johnson has been so polemically engaged against. But I recognize, as should he, that science, and the structure of scientific hypotheses that constitute the modern view of nature, cannot in and of themselves furnish us with a metaphysics, much less with anything resembling a full-blown philosophy. Mr. Johnson's much-maligned "materialism" can be, as a matter of science itself, no more than an epistemological model employed in scientific investigations, which constitutes only the scientific method, or the "heuristic" of science. This method has been validated by its historical success, and will be invalidated and abandoned when—and only when—it no longer succeeds in the investigation of nature. . . .

Mr. Johnson, along with many others, may not like evolutionary theory's doctrines, but they should recognize that they will need to find some conceptual framework in which to accommodate them—until or unless some better theory emerges—or suffer the risk of finding that their thinking has less and less connection to the world as we actually find it today.

Edmund Weinmann
Huntington, NY

Phillip E. Johnson does a nice job exposing the popular cant of Lewontin, Gould, Sagan, and other unrestrained neo-Darwinians. Their arrogant attempts to reduce every aspect of the human condition to evolutionary processes are obviously driven by ideology, not science.

I have taught and published scientific articles on human ethology and sociobiology for many years and have never once felt evolutionary theory to be a threat to my faith as a Catholic. Why? Because Darwin's theory deals mainly with phylogenetic changes in physical structures and some of their correlated physiological and behavioral functions. He had no empirical evidence that mind (the soul) evolved in the same way physical structures did. He hoped such evolution did take place, but apparently was intelligent enough to know that the attempt to reduce mind to matter in any convincing way was neither good science nor an efficient way to spend his time.

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Today, after more than a century of effort, empirical data suggesting that the human mind has evolved solely through natural selection or genetic drift are simply not available. What is available are many exciting speculations by bright, if not unpartisan, thinkers in evolutionary psychology. Their speculations have stimulated interesting empirical research and for this reason alone are not to be ignored or disparaged. But the results of such research, whatever they are, cannot be convincingly interpreted in the current manner evolutionary dogmatists want. What is convincing in science are replicable empirical findings, broadly consistent with other findings, not rhetoric about presumed historical events.

Scientific materialism, especially of the rebellious adolescent kind, may sell books and get one on TV. But by such bread one cannot live as a happy or honest scientist or as a satisfied layperson. Humans have a persistent curiosity to find the ultimate bread and not to be satisfied with a half-baked loaf of ideology.

William Charlesworth
Stockholm, WI

Phillip E. Johnson appears to be defending God but is showing a serious lack of faith and constructing a major barrier to belief with his ill-conceived attack on the foundation of the scientific method. Surely he is aware that science is the child of the Church. The scientific enterprise was born as an attempt to understand the Creator by studying His creation.

The scientific endeavor aims at predicting measurable events on the basis of control and measurement of prior events. To anyone who knows God, this is a statement of faith in the faithfulness of the Creator who makes the sun to shine on the just and the unjust, not a denial of God's goodness and power. When the skeptics heard the disciples speaking in tongues at Pentecost they said "they are drunk," and even Jesus' own family thought he had cracked up. The unbeliever will always find an excuse not to believe. The proper answer to such potshots is to continue living the truth. When one defends belief one must be careful to give God His due. He has chosen to make an orderly universe that yields to intelligent investigation. He will provide proofs. To try to defend Him with ill conceived arguments that earn well-deserved ridicule gives ammunition to the enemy. Professor Johnson equates the materialist assumption of the atheist with the law of cause and effect. A law professor should be able to see that the consequence of insisting on Special Revelation to understand science would be to terminate the scientific enterprise. . . .

Peter M. Webster
Toronto, Ontario

Phillip E. Johnson decries the commitment of the scientific community to scientific materialism. That this bias is demonstrable is all too true; but this alone is not the foundational basis for the lionization of the theory of evolution by scientists.

The life of a scientist necessarily involves a commitment to materialism. Each of us expects the scientist to be a materialist at heart. It is the job of the scientist to examine material evidence, to test it, and to form theories and hypotheses based upon the evidence presented.

An a priori commitment to materialism is demanded of the scientist in his work. What is not demanded, or even desired, is that the scientist make judgments of value based upon his findings. This is what has caused the abnormal, almost religious adherence of scientists to the theory of evolution. Many scientists have concluded that evolution is worthy of belief.

The process of making judgments of value based upon material evidence is more properly the realm of the higher sciences—cosmology, epistemology, metaphysics, ethics, philosophy, and theology. Carl Sagan, et al., have not been properly trained in these higher sciences; therefore, conclusions proposed by them in these areas should be suspect. . . .

It is bad enough that scientists choose to believe in a theory of origin, that, as Mr. Johnson correctly points out, remains unsupported by

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many in the scientific community. What is far worse, however, is the eagerness of otherwise scholarly men and women to exit their realm of expertise and enter the realm of theology and faith. What these scientists really support is another religion, that of Scientism. One of the basic tenets of this religion is the belief in evolutionary theory as the explanation of universal origin. As such, the accepted theories of Scientism should be afforded as much respect as the beliefs of other religions, and should undergo thorough critical analysis with an eye to how the accepted theories of this faith stand up to the material evidence presented.

Michael Beeman
Dearborn Heights, MI

I should be humble about the criticism I am hereby making, since much of what I have learned on this subject comes from Phillip E. Johnson's own work. But in his essay "The Unraveling of Scientific Materialism" he seems to me to have missed the negative import of what Pope John Paul II has done in his statement on evolution to the Pontifical Academy of Sciences.

Johnson, William Provine, and others have been making clear the incompatibility between the spiritual origin of man and the Darwinian/neo-Darwinian/materialistic view. As they have pointed out, both scientists and religionists have labored to obscure this incompatibility in order to obtain a truce in the war between them, but it is a truce, as Johnson argues, that stands on the terms of the materialist.

Now the Pope has thrown his strength behind the obfuscation, although no doubt unwittingly and with the best of intentions. First, he upgrades the status of evolution to "more than a hypothesis," just when proof for Darwin's theories is being shown to be less and less adequate. Then he reintroduces something like the language of the obfuscators—evolution is acceptable as long as we allow that God somewhere along the line imparts the soul or spirit to man. But evolution does not allow that God does any such thing. It is an entirely materialistic explanation—that is why scientists are so attached to it. Allowing in some vague way that a spiritual element is compatible with evolution is simply an indulgence that scientists may grant in public to avoid conflict but disavow in the practice (and probably the teaching) of science itself. This is what I conclude from reading Johnson among others.

Carol Iannone
New York, NY

Phillip E. Johnson replies:

The point of my article was that neo-Darwinism finds its main support in an a priori adherence to metaphysical materialism, and not in empirical evidence. I relied on direct quotes to show that Richard Lewontin, one of the most prestigious spokesmen for evolutionary biology, agrees with me about what is at issue, although he approves of the a priori commitment to materialism. As Lewontin puts it, the crucial assumption is that "We exist as material beings in a material world, all of whose phenomena are the consequences of material relations among material entities."

Edward Weinmann knows better than to take on Lewontin, so he writes as if I were relying on the authority of Kant rather than on Lewontin. He then gives the standard spin-doctored story that scientific materialists typically resort to when they are challenged: we are just innocently proposing hypotheses for testing, and aren't saying anything about ontology or ultimate reality. Baloney. When science educators tell their students that fully naturalistic evolution is a "fact," they are telling them this is how things really are, and implying that God had nothing to do with the process. Mr. Weinmann himself says that those of us who deny that neo-Darwinism is true are at odds with "the world as we actually find it today." That is an ontological statement, and he commits the fallacy of begging the question when he attempts to back his ontological claims by citing the success of science (specifically, neo-Darwinism). Whether science has been successful at explaining biological origins by a materialist theory is the point at issue.

William Charlesworth is correct that Darwinian science has been unsuccessful in explaining the origin of the mind, but he should understand that it has been equally unsuccessful in explaining the origin of the bacterial cell. Neo-Darwinism is a sham all the way up and all the way down.

If Peter Webster actually read my article, he did not understand a word of it. This subject has nothing to do with Special Revelation, or speaking in tongues at Pentecost. Rather, the subject is what the scientific evidence actually shows when it is viewed without bias, rather than through the distorting lens of atheist philosophy.

I discuss the recent statement of Pope John Paul II to the Pontifical Academy of Sciences in Chapter 6 of my latest book, *Defeating Darwinism by Opening Minds*. I greatly admire the Pope, who on this subject as well as others is fighting a courageous battle against the forces of modernism inside and outside the Church. The papal statement did say that materialism is unacceptable when it extends to the human spirit, but it neglected to say that mainstream science insists upon a fully materialistic theory of evolution, one which resolutely keeps that divine foot outside the door. Any deficiencies in the statement are probably attributable to the vigorous lobbying of a clique of academics that dominates the "Religion and Science" field, and that wants to "save" religion by bringing it into conformity with evolutionary naturalism.

The Blood of the Martyrs

Nina Shea's complaint in "Atrocities Not Fit to Print" (November 1997) concerning the persecution of Christians around the world is very American but perhaps not very Christian. American because "in publicity of the press do we trust." Less than Christian for the same reason.

I live in the Third World and work directly in over thirty countries. Among them are some where friends and associates have recently been murdered because they were Chris-

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tians. Other friends have fled their homeland because they knew the threats against them to be real.

It is interesting to contrast the reaction of one of my friends with that of Ms. Shea. When I ask him about the recent murder of several from his church he answers, "I thank God for their deaths." He not only is not concerned to publish the "news" of the deaths, he believes God is bringing forth great fruit from bloody seed once again. One is reminded that the Good News is based in blood and that we followers are not greater than our master.

Why would Ms. Shea expect the secular press to support us? I would suggest it is neither "logistical difficulties" nor a "simple lack of understanding and interest" that keeps correspondents of foreign desks from reporting. They are simply from the camp of unbelievers, which we are actively seeking to invade with life. As a result, for them, we have the smell of death about us (2 Corinthians 2:16). As much as we feel-good, late-twentieth-century Christians may want to deny it, we have enemies who mean business. Some of them are journalists.

It would be more instructive for us to learn what St. James meant when he instructed Christians to "consider it pure joy . . . whenever you face trials of many kinds" (James 1:2). We say we believe there is power in prayer but our trust in the press belies that. We herald the power of the Word but wallow in words written. We talk of the sharp sword of spiritual warfare and disdain it for the poor pen of publicity.

William T. Hunter, Jr.
Santo Domingo,
Dominican Republic

Nina Shea replies:

While it is true that martyrdom is glorious and the Bible makes a strong assertion that persecution for righteousness' sake will ever confront the Christian, we must put anti-Christian persecution in proper perspective. The persecutors are wrong and the persecution itself is an evil. We are *solemnly compelled by the Scriptures* to take up the cause of the needy and to speak for those who are victims.

As I quoted evangelical author Ravi Zacharias in my book *In the Lion's Den*, "The Scriptures challenge us to reach out to those who hurt, to do all in our power for the rescue of those who are victimized, and if need be, to beseech the powers of the land to give each citizen the right of being treated as a fellow human being."

The New Testament gives us clear guidelines for addressing persecution. First, we must pray. When Peter and Paul were in prison, the entire church gathered to pray for their release. There is also a call to action. This is the moral imperative of the parable of the Good Samaritan. The Samaritan stopped to extend the love of Christ to the victim. The apostle Paul urged the early Church to take responsibility for the well-being of fellow believers. "Therefore," he said, "as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers" (Galatians 6:10). He also wrote, "Remember those in prison as if you were their fellow prisoners" (Hebrews 13:3).

There is precedent for appealing to the government for justice. In Acts, when the mob wanted to lynch Paul, he laid claim to his Roman citizenship and demanded a hearing before Caesar.

Just as the Bible tells us that the poor will always be with us, yet commands us to help them, we must take the same compassionate approach towards persecuted religious believers.

I Do, Really

As an independent evangelical pastor without benefit of prescribed liturgy, I have sometimes felt pressured to dumb down weddings. So thanks, thanks, a thousand thanks for David Blankenhorn's "I Do?" (November 1997).

I hope the article sparks a renewal of respect for marriage vows. If my fellow pastors would recognize the deep wisdom, not to mention plain good sense, of Mr. Blankenhorn's proposals, we could make a credible gospel challenge to the culture of divorce. We wouldn't eliminate the church-hopping that takes place when would-be brides and grooms shop for a clergyman who will give them the ceremony they want. But we would witness to the integrity of the wedding service. If couples heard that witness from three or four ministers in succession, who knows? They might think twice before saying "I do."

(The Rev.) Kenneth Langley
Christ Community Church
Zion, IL

Although *The Book of Common Prayer* now has a form for solemnizing marriages that allows the couple to write the rest of the service, the vows are still required in one of two traditional forms. And since Episcopal clergy are required by both their ordination vows and Canon Law to adhere to the text and rubrics of the Prayer Book, I would like to add the Episcopal Church to David Blankenhorn's list of churches in which the bride and groom do not write their own vows.

I would also like to commend to the author and your readers the marriage service in *The Book of Common Prayer* on two other points. The "Declaration of Consent" in this service ("Will you love, honor . . .") requires the reply "I will" and not "I do." In fact, nowhere in the service are the bride and groom asked to respond "I do." The question is not one of "how do you feel about this person today?" but "how will you act towards this person until the day you die?" It is not a question of emotion, but of will. This response, alone, is sufficient for a lifetime of marriage homilies.

I would further note that the actual vows in the marriage service do not ask for a response but require the bride and groom to repeat them, word for word. Both here and in the declaration of consent the wording is in the classical form and demands the expectation that these promises are made in God's name and "until we are parted by death." . . .

(The Rev.) Charles B. King, Jr.
The Church of the Holy Cross
Warrensburg, NY

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David Blankenhorn's "I Do?" serves as a striking case study illustrating George Orwell's observation, "If thought corrupts language, language also corrupts thought." Without doubt, modern wedding vow language has been both reflective of and corrosive to the concept of marriage in our country.

About fifteen years ago in the course of my pastoral ministry, I perceived that couples inventing their own vows tended to destroy the sense of community and continuity that should characterize a wedding. The mature in the midst were not hearing and remembering what they had said at their own weddings, nor were the young hearing what they should anticipate. A vital consensus was evaporating.

My discontent over this launched a search for a better way. The search ended outside my own denominational heritage when I discovered *The Book of Common Prayer*. After some serious effort at blending the language of the 1928 and 1979 editions, I formulated a wedding ceremony and wording for the vows that I humbly believe cannot be improved upon.

I am the first to admit that these words are almost entirely borrowed, and the first to point out that their dignity, beauty, substance, and relevance make "personalized" vows sound trivial by comparison. Though I am not a hard-nosed pastor, I have, since slightly adapting this noble language, made it the nonnegotiable element in every wedding ceremony I have performed, including such phrases as "with my body I thee honor." I have found every couple I have worked with eager to say to each other what these very traditional vows require them to say and completely uninterested in composing their own vows. And I live in California, of all places!

(The Rev.) Jay F. Dudley
Northridge Church of God
Fair Oaks, CA

The One True Church

I just finished reading "The Denomination Called Catholic" by David R. Carlin in the November 1997 issue. I would like to suggest that his breaking the Christian experience in America down into three parts, Church, Sect, and Denomination, is too limiting. There already is a "Fourth Way" in America; it is called a Movement.

Movements have always been more characteristic of the religious experience in America than specific religious institutions. From the Great Awakening through modern day revivalist and monastic movements, the reality of religious experience has been trans-institutional.

The reason for this is that for Americans salvation is seen as a direct individual relationship of the soul with God, rather than a result of being a member of the One True Church. What keeps this approach from becoming a case of isolated individualism is that God put us here on earth for a purpose. An individual who has experienced the love of God seeks to share that love through fellowship with others.

Robert Maynard
Williston, VT

. . . I was astonished by David Carlin's article denouncing "democratization" and "frequent ecumenical councils" and the "tolerance of dissent," concluding with the view that the Roman Catholic Church is "better than all competing religions" as a religion that sees truth and "sees it whole" while other religions are either false or only partially true. . . .

What ever happened to John XXIII? Are there any liberals left today in the Catholic Church? Is the next step to teach that error has no rights and that there is no salvation outside the Catholic Church? Must we read Dostoyevsky's Grand Inquisitor again?. . .

(The Rev.) Robert M. Haven
Mt. Dora, FL

Typology, Protestant and Catholic

Peter J. Leithart paints with a mountain-sized brush ("Typology and the Public Church," November 1997) when he suggests that "evangelicals are at one with Protestant modernism in their rejection of typology." In point of fact, most Protestant scholars, especially evangelicals, do not reject typology. How could they given the fact that Christ and his apostles employed that method of biblical interpretation? What Protestants do typically reject, however, is the uncontrolled use of typology. This is necessitated because of their acceptance of *sola scriptura*.

A Protestant's only source for authority is the Bible. He has no right even to be a Protestant if he is wrong about this foundational matter. Because of that, Protestants, more than Roman Catholics, must be extremely careful about the way they interpret Scripture. Thus, their scholars have devised a number of rules about the way they interpret a text in order to limit the dangers of eisegesis. The problem with the use of typology within a Protestant setting is its inherent subjectivity. Roman Catholics do not have this problem. Since they recognize a second nexus of authority in the Church, their use of typology is controlled. If an interpreter strays the Church can correct him or her. Protestants, however, must correct themselves. Therefore, in the use of typology they have decided to accept any typological interpretation of the Old Testament mentioned explicitly by Christ or his apostles within the New Testament, while maintaining a posture of unease or distrust toward any other. This method may rob them of some of the richness to be mined from the Old Testament text, but it allows them to be more confident that the Word of God is not being replaced by the word of man.

David McKay
Carthage, IL

Peter J. Leithart replies:

I generalize, of course, and am happy to concede that recently evangelical scholars have been notably kinder to patristic and medieval exegesis. Mr. McKay, however, confirms my original charge: to select a handful of texts for typological interpretation is precisely to reject typology as the controlling hermeneutical framework,

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for what is to be done with that remaining mass of the Old Testament never cited by the apostles?

As for the Protestant-Catholic difference: I would roundly dispute the idea that Scripture is the "only" authority for Protestants, since Scripture itself requires submission to a "second nexus" of authority in civil and ecclesiastical matters (Romans 13:1-7; Hebrews 13:17). And I find the distinction between Catholic scholars corrected by "the Church" and Protestants correcting "themselves" somewhat misleading. Whoever are these Protestant censors, if not "the Church"?

Staying or Leaving

It is with deep compassion that one reads William Murchison's account of "developments" in the Episcopal Church ("Episcopalians: The Leftward Center," November 1997). However, the utility of the enterprise of an "emerging province" seems questionable, and one wonders if it is anything more than the brave, empty words uttered so frequently during the past thirty years. Anglicans in general, and Anglo-Catholics in particular, have a most peculiar sense of catholicity, one that is ultimately but a form of congregationalism that fails to comprehend the situation or to take seriously the reality of those around them. For example, among other points unmentioned by Mr. Murchison is that much of the Anglican Communion, including the Church of England itself, is in little better theological shape than the Episcopal Church in this country. . . .

Mr. Murchison claims that the four remaining Anglo-Catholic dioceses in the U.S. are becoming a basis for the formation of a new province within the Episcopal Church or within the Anglican Communion. If one can get beyond the question of why bother given the state of things, one must then ask if the claims for this new group are in fact credible. Facts indicate they are not. First, without becoming yet another breakaway group, it has no power to endure as it cannot canonically perpetuate itself in either the Episcopal Church or the Anglican Communion. Second, Mr. Murchison glosses over the fact that in the much vaunted but poorly thought through effort to bring a bishop to trial on dogmatic grounds, those presenting the case chose not to appeal the preliminary ruling to the House of Bishops because they believed they could not win politically: hardly a credible commitment to witnessing to Eternal Truth, the pearl of great price, the treasure hidden in the field. . . .

Having reached my own crisis regarding the Episcopal Church a year ago, I made the commitment to become Orthodox, letting go of the hell of a purposeless effort of trying to find a way to remain Anglican, and to focus on the Way to become Christian. Though theologically challenging, . . . the overwhelming experience is of the consolation of the Spirit surpassing understanding. I have been especially richly blessed in the Antiochian Archdiocese in that I have been able to know both a vibrant, healthy, and warmly receptive Byzantine Rite parish and a new Western Rite mission, which has helped provide an efficient idiom for worship and prayer in these hectic times.

John R. Heffernan
Reston, VA

William Murchison replies:

When one stalks out of a once-beloved, now-corrupted relationship or institution, the understandable temptation is to look back and exclaim, phooey! I think this is what Mr. Heffernan, God bless him, is doing, as he proceeds from Anglicanism to Orthodoxy. He may be right about those of us who have chosen to stand and fight on Anglican ground; I only wish he could acknowledge that we stand because it is *our* ground. There has been much holiness, much devotion here. Maybe there can be again. But running won't bring that about; only standing—and praying—will do the job.

A Catholic Rush to Judgment?

Regarding "Sin and Risk Aversion" (Public Square, November 1997): It is in the nature of witch hunts that those in politics, religion, and journalism who have promoted them, participated in them, or publicly endorsed them have done so under the guise of "the public good," and with a perceived "public sanction" that has historically consisted of two equally influential components: the noise of a few, and the silence of many.

It was, therefore, with appreciation for the courage of Richard John Neuhaus that I read his comments concerning the politically and emotionally explosive topics of the sexual abuse of children, public hysteria, and the response of the Church's hierarchy and clergy to those within their ranks who have been publicly accused of sexual abuse.

As one of the incarcerated priests from whom Father Neuhaus has

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received the correspondence he cites, I have a firsthand account of the presumption of guilt, rush to judgment, and shunning to which his comments give voice. As Fr. Neuhaus is aware, I have maintained my innocence throughout this process, and continue to do so. I live daily with the devastating fact that I would not now be incarcerated if I did not maintain my innocence. The choice presented to me at trial three years ago was to either participate in a negotiated lie, and serve a token prison sentence, or stand by the truth and serve a life sentence. I continue to opt to reject a negotiated lie, and I remain in prison.

Fr. Neuhaus' article presupposed that some would view the correspondence he has received as self-serving. Perhaps, at some level, it is. I stand to gain nothing, however, from writing of my experience in the justice system and the Church. I will not gain freedom. I will not be believed by most, and I will not regain respect, acceptance, trust, support, or even a letter or prison visit from my brother priests or diocesan authorities. The Corporal Works of Mercy should not, in any case, be exercised because an institution has been embarrassed into doing so. I know that anything I write merely leaves me open to further ridicule, judgment, and presumption of guilt. Writing about this feels much more frightening to me than it does self-serving. . . .

Attempts at risk aversion by shunning the accused, which has undeniably been the response of some in the Church, have not really served to either avert financial risk or improve public perception of the Church's integrity in the matter. A growing number of clergy have personal experience of the Church's current efforts to indicate that it no longer "shelters" its accused, but now holds them in disdainful contempt. The process has merely been seen as the Church's attempt to respond to a public scandal by perpetrating a private one. I correspond with a number of imprisoned priests, guilty and not, who live as outcasts and pariahs in both the unforgiving prison society in which they now exist and the apparently unforgiving Church which they once served.

Gordon J. MacRae
Concord, NH

Evangelizing Catholics

As an evangelical, I too am disturbed by the strident statements made by some evangelical leaders about Roman Catholicism (While We're At It, November 1997). I personally know too many genuine believers (my daughter-in-law included) in that communion to paint with so wide a brush.

However, Catholics would be mistaken to conclude that all defections from their church are the result of misleading attacks by "Catholic bashers." Ralph Martin, lay leader in the Catholic charismatic renewal, addresses this issue in "Why Catholics Leave" (*New Covenant*, July/August, 1990).

Martin states that one response to this situation is to blame Protestants for evangelizing Catholics. However, Martin's view is that "while 'underhanded' means of evangelizing are not unknown, most of these ex-Catholics were not lured by such means." Often "they met coworkers, friends . . . or a preacher at a church service . . . who offered them a fuller experience of Christ . . . than they were experiencing in the Catholic Church." Indeed, "Many talk as if they've encountered the Lord himself for the first time."

Bishop Flores of San Antonio spoke almost thirty years ago "of many Catholics who have been 'sacramentalized' but never effectively 'evangelized.'" Father Avery Dulles, S.J., has written more recently of the "many Christians, including Catholics, [who] were never evangelized, [who] have never made a living personal commitment to Christ and the Gospel."

Ralph E. MacKenzie
San Diego, CA

History and Truth

Richard John Neuhaus (While We're At It, November 1997) muses, along with Bonhoeffer and Kierkegaard, that Martin Luther today would be so aghast at subsequent history that, given a chance, he would go back and say just the opposite of what he said during the Reformation. I suppose one could just as easily argue that the birth of this nation resulted more from the "secondary motives of history" than from the "genius of its founding," and that, seeing both personal liberty and governmental regulation gone haywire, the founding fathers today would say the opposite of what they said then.

So what? I'd like to think of them as less gutless than that, just as I personally would like to think of Luther as one bold enough to say "Here I stand. I can do no other," not, "Here I stand unless things don't work out down the road." But either way such an argument does not address the issue of whether what was said then remains true or not. A disowned truth remains true.

I realize Father Neuhaus and I disagree on what constitutes an authoritative source of truth, but we should agree that neither Luther's opinions (real or fancied) nor the current state of the Church address the issue of whether Lutherans confess the truth or not. Truth derives from the authority of its source, not the desirability of its consequences. God judges individual Christians according to the fidelity of Christ, and the Church by her fidelity to Christ, i.e., the revelation of Scripture and the Scriptures' God.

(The Rev.) Peter A. Speckhard
Community of Faith Lutheran Church
Spring Grove, IL

RJN replies:

Here I stand. For the truth as best as I can understand it. The truth is infallible; my apprehension of it is not. Now we see through a glass darkly (1 Corinthians 13). Given persistent disagreements among us, in the End Time, when everything is clarified, many of us (I expect all of us) will have occasion to say that some things were not as we thought they were. I trust we will be judged faithful when we know more as we were judged faithful when we knew less.

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"Infallible!" "Excommunicated!" "Heresy!"

The words "infallible," "excommunicated," and "heresy" are back in our Catholic vocabulary in a big way.

• On Nov. 18, 1995 the Holy See, with the Pope's explicit approval, announced that the Church's 2,000 year-old ban on priestesses is *infallible*.

• On May 15, 1996 Bishop Fabian Bruskewitz *excommunicated* Catholics in his diocese who retained membership in organizations perilous to the Catholic faith, such as Planned Parenthood, the Hemlock Society, Call to Action, and Catholics for a Free Choice. The Pope's response was: "Way to go, Bishop Bruskewitz!"

• On Jan. 2, 1997 the Holy See, with the Holy Father's explicit approval, *excommunicated* theologian Tissa Balasuriya for *heresy*.

Of course, the dissenters and their pals in the "let's-dialogue-with-dissent" crowd sent up howls of outrage. But we, the long-suffering orthodox laity, breathed sighs of relief. Why? Because we've been *inundated* by heresy and dissent — from the pulpit, on parish councils and liturgy committees, in Catholic schools, colleges, and universities, in Catholic periodicals (including diocesan papers!), on retreats and in "faith-sharing" groups, etc.

"Dialogue with dissenters?" Hey, we've been there, done that. With Vatican II documents under our arm, many of us have engaged a blatantly heretical pastor in dialogue, only to be put down for not understanding "the spirit" of Vatican II. We've calmly discussed a New Agey textbook with a Director of Religious Ed, only to be informed that we're unqualified to have an opinion because we don't have a master's degree in "Religious Studies" from the local diploma mill. We've politely approached a Sex Ed teacher in a Catholic school who's peddling "gay-is-good," only to be scolded for being out of step with the times.

And then these dissenters, who brush us off, have the gall to accuse the Holy See of being "arrogant," "authoritarian," and "unwilling to listen"! *Give us a break!*

Cardinal Newman said, "some authority there must be if there is a revelation given." Catholicism is a *revealed* religion, not a concocted one, and our Lord gave *authority* to St. Peter and his successor popes to guard that revelation from fads and delusions. We at the NEW OXFORD REVIEW, an orthodox lay-Catholic monthly magazine with an international audience, are published out of Berkeley, so we've seen fads and delusions galore. We're out here on the front lines, having a jolly good time hammering heresy and dissent.

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This Time

The Fifties As I Never Knew Them

James Nuechterlein

The first duty of the historian, I used to tell my students, is to understand the past on its own terms. It should be obvious that good history requires an empathetic imagination: the ability to get inside the minds of those of other times and other places and see the world as they saw it. One may or may not, in the end, have sympathy for that other world. To understand a point of view is not necessarily to agree with it. But in any case, judgments of the past carry weight and invite assent only when marked with imaginative understanding.

Absent such understanding, historians fall into the fatal error of anachronistic judgment. In its extreme forms, we spot the error immediately. No serious scholar would take seriously, for example, a study of the Reformation era rebuking the disputants for their inordinate concern for religious dogma or their lack of mutual toleration. (Though I have read histories that did just that.) Protestants and Catholics fought each other over matters of doctrine because they were sure that these were, quite literally, issues of life or death. To "tolerate" an opponent's error on a fundamental point of doctrine was to consign all who might be seduced by that error to eternal damnation. Modern secularist scholars might wonder at that judgment and might well conclude that it is good that our present age has (for the most part) left that judgment behind. But if they are competent historians, they will, at least in the first instance, attempt to understand sixteenth-century religious disputes as the people of the time did.

Anachronistic judgments closer to us in time and place are more difficult to spot, but they are still abuses of history. I was reminded of that while watching, with rising choler, the History Channel's recent seven-part documentary, *David Halberstam's The Fifties*. (The series is roughly based on Halberstam's 1993 book and he figures prominently in it as a talking head.) The program's take on the fifties is essentially that of a prosecuting attorney's, and it brings to the decade's sensibility all the sympathy—and understanding—that H. L. Mencken brought to the rural culture of Tennessee in his coverage of the Scopes Trial in 1925. Where did these appalling (if often amusing) primitives come from, the series implicitly asks, and what are we civilized people to make of them? (I refer to "the series" rather than Halberstam himself because his book, for all its liberal superiority, had not nearly the air of unrelenting condescension of the television production.)

I do not pretend to disinterestedness on this matter. I came of age in the fifties, and I have a fondness for the period that quite transcends its actual qualities. My daughter recently remarked that, to hear me talk, civilization reached its fullest flower somewhere in the middle of the Eisenhower years. That exaggerates the point, of course—though, come to think of it, it is hard to imagine a quality of life richer than that attained in the American heartland in or about the year 1957.

My own prejudices aside, *David Halberstam's The Fifties* will seem, for those who lived through it, a grossly distorted portrait of the era—except, perhaps, for those who were miserable and alienated the whole time. There were such people, of course, as there are always people out of step with the dominant ethos of an age. But it seems odd that the perspective of the minority—and it was, except perhaps among intellectuals, a very small minority—should not merely overshadow but virtually obliterate that of the majority. This is a picture of the fifties pitched to the sensibility of the sixties. Indeed, the only hints of redeeming virtue the series finds in the fifties is in those instances where, as in the beginnings of the civil rights movement, we have anticipations of the next decade's excitements.

Other than that, it's all, to recall a phrase of the time, a vast wasteland. The first episode features the presumed twin horrors of the period—nuclear weapons and anti-Communist hysteria. Both, it seems, could and should have been avoided. The U.S. built a vast weapons arsenal to protect against a nonexistent military threat—the Soviet Union, we are duly assured, had no aggressive designs—and of course all anticommunism was nothing more than McCarthyism.

It is difficult to exaggerate the hysteria with which these hysterias are portrayed. One would imagine from this episode that the children of the age spent their days cowering under their school desks in fear of nuclear attack and their nights warding off nightmares about either those attacks or the Communists they had been warned were hiding under their beds. And it wasn't much better for grown-ups. One fearless liberal recounts the courage it took, what with all the political witch-hunts, to wear a Stevenson button. (He lived in Manhattan at the time and says this with a straight face.) The show can't even get the genuine evil of McCarthyism straight. The script presents the Wisconsin Senator as a political cynic, exploiting an issue he knew to have no substance. But scholars have long since demonstrated that McCarthy came firmly to believe in the internal Communist threat: he was undoubtedly a

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thug, but he was a sincere thug.

Aside from recurring sermonettes on the evils of American foreign policy—a lengthy segment on John Foster Dulles is an unrelieved diatribe—the other six episodes of the series pay no attention to politics. Eisenhower is mentioned only in connection with the cynical hucksterism that presumably dominated the decade. That episode—subtly titled "Selling the American Way"—manages to suggest without explicitly saying so that Ike's political popularity derived simply from the slickness with which his handlers packaged him.

Indeed, if there is a central theme to the documentary, it is the pervasive and pernicious effect of advertising on the culture of the decade. The fifties was one big meretricious illusion, the series suggests, its people hollow at the core, caught up in a mindless pursuit of empty suburban affluence, repressed in their sexuality, vulgar in their cultural tastes, neglectful of their civic duties—and mostly racist to boot.

The series gives favorable notice only to the decade's victims and dissenters: blacks, of course (the segment on race is easily the best episode—it's weak on context, but the visuals are great and for once the producers have a subject appropriate to their incessant moralizing); Betty Friedan, representing the decade's objectified and oppressed womanhood; Grace Metalious, author of *Peyton Place* and chronicler of the sexual urgencies seething beneath the era's surface of banal respectability; Alfred Kinsey, whose pseudo-scientific reports on sexual behavior are here celebrated as "darkness wiped away"; the novelist Jack Kerouac—more sexual liberation plus, with all his fellow beats, critic of the decade's "police state authoritarianism"; Ralph Nader, scourge of the auto industry and, more broadly, of the decade's smothering corporate culture.

Anti-Babbittry is by now a venerable tradition in American cultural criticism. Things could hardly be otherwise in a society so quintessentially middle class. And since the fifties represents the apotheosis of middle-class culture, it is not surprising—or even objectionable—that it should be a particular target for such criticism. But what established the original *Babbitt* as a minor classic of American literature was the undercurrent of affectionate sympathy evident beneath Sinclair Lewis' mordant satire. Part of him loved what he laughed at. More importantly, he brought to his portrait of George Babbitt—and earlier, of the inhabitants of *Main Street*—a deep understanding. He acknowledged, for all their foibles, their essential decency.

There is no comparable complex understanding in this documentary. The series is itself riddled with the banality, superficiality, and small-mindedness it deplores. It sets up straw targets and ploddingly demolishes them. Its great critical discovery, endlessly elaborated, is that ordinary people lead ordinary lives. The producers of this show aren't, in the end, radical critics. They're just snobs. And they don't begin to comprehend the decade they savage.

Now you understand why, throughout the time I wasted watching the week-long series, I had regularly to suppress the urge to scream at the innocent TV screen: "That's not the way it was. That's not the way it was at all." So why did I watch it? I guess it's either masochism or a fascination with the decade so compelling it can endure even *David Halberstam's The Fifties.* FT

Valentines

Patron Saints of Lovers

No cutie-pie cupid wings fluttering rings about the heart
or head, no fancy frilly two-way arrows,
or rose-colored alphabets shaped into vows;
just a pretty trick of history, an early-spring wish
when birds twittered about each other,
and Roman schoolboys, for love of Juno, drew girls' names
to tease them mercilessly with swatches of soft goat hide—
all to guarantee purity, which has nothing
to do with the celibate Valentines,
of which there were, indeed, two,
although in different times and cities:
a priest, a bishop, passionately faithful,
martyred separately, in love only with the red,
red blood of Christ.

Marjorie Maddox

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Opinion

Letter from Paris

Jean Duchesne

As could have been anticipated, the Declaration of Repentance issued by French bishops last fall concerning the silence and passivity of the Church in the face of the Holocaust evoked strong reactions. It is unfortunate that the document that triggered the commotion does not seem to have been carefully read and studied.

The press did not help matters. *Le Monde,* which is the Parisian counterpart of the *New York Times,* published ahead of time what was claimed to be the full text. But that was a pirated incomplete working draft, from which the final version differed seriously on several key points. In general, the headlines on the story contended that the French Church had apologized to Jews. That is an inaccurate summary.

In the first place, the Declaration was not an official document of the French Bishops' Conference. It was signed by the bishops of the dioceses where detention and transit camps were located under German occupation and the Vichy regime during World War II. Those dioceses represent between a quarter and a third of the French Church. This means that the national Church—which at the time, in any case, had no canonical or theological identity and existed only in the minds of a few academics and (mostly anticlerical) politicians—was not explicitly involved.

The signatories were selected, therefore, not on their personal feelings about this sensitive issue, but on a strictly historical and geographical criterion. None of them indicated any objection or reservation about the statement. No bishop who was not involved has said he wished he could have been associated or that he would have declined. The Bishop of Strasbourg, who had not cosigned the document although his diocese was concerned, has since explained that he stood by his brothers, but that the case of his diocese, which was then annexed to the Third Reich, was associated with the Church in Germany (where another statement of contrition has already been published). The episcopal communion in France thus remained united on the issue—despite reports to the contrary—even though not all bishops were involved and the national ecclesiastical structure played no role.

One further point of detail. The text of the Declaration—which was issued at Drancy, site of the notorious camp from which the greatest number of French Jews (including Cardinal Jean-Marie Lustiger's mother) were sent to their deaths—was read not by an archbishop, as was widely reported, but by the local ordinary, Bishop Olivier de Berranger of St. Denis. The journalists who rushed to kick this youngish prelate upstairs, perhaps on the assumption that being in the limelight is tantamount to a promotion, failed to notice that he is a Jesuit.

More substantively, Bishop de Berranger did not actually apologize to Jews for Christian passivity during the Shoah. What he said, in the name of all the bishops concerned, was: "We *beg for the pardon of God,* and we *ask the Jewish people to hear* this word of repentance" (emphasis added). Only God can forgive and grant humans the strength to do the same. Any believer knows this, but it seems that few of the professional commentators do. The consequence is that the Declaration has generally been interpreted as purely human business, where God virtually need not have been mentioned, and that the fundamentally religious and spiritual substance has too often been overlooked.

Most Jewish leaders, however, did "hear this word of repentance," and responded in thoughtful tones. Several other organizations (including the national police union and the Order of Doctors created by Vichy) issued their own confessions of moral failure during the war. There were a few radical rabbis (and a handful of staunch leftist secularists) who said the Declaration was too late and could not make any difference anyway. But most of the angry reactions came from people who argued that Christians had nothing to be sorry for.

Some nationalist politicians, for example, clung to de Gaulle's theory (which François Mitterand seconded) that, since the Vichy regime was illegal and did not represent France, and since, further, all those who had freely collaborated with Nazi Germany were duly punished after the war, no citizen should feel ashamed of what he might have been *forced* to do (or not do) during that unfortunate parenthesis in the country's history. President Chirac had already eroded this convenient notion a few months earlier by admitting publicly that State authorities from top to bottom had sometimes gone further than they were obliged to by the circumstances.

Everything was complicated by the upcoming trial of Maurice Papon, the eighty-seven-year-old former Vichy official and later top-ranking civil servant and Cabinet minister accused of active involvement in the deportation of Jews. The problem in Papon's case and others is how to draw the line between willful and passive participation. The Drancy Declaration was seen by Mr. Papon's supporters as an untimely interference, unduly suggesting just as the

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trial was about to begin that in his position under Vichy he was no less guilty than the Church.

But again, this is to reduce the whole affair to a merely human and political wound that the national conscience remains reluctant to face. It denies the spiritual dimension of the problem. Healing should not be confused with oblivion, the Declaration firmly suggests, and it involves the law and justice of God, who alone makes forgiveness and reconciliation possible.

Another objection to the Declaration was that the Church in fact did do its duty during World War II. The idea is that, just as the martyrs purified the Church during early persecutions, a few heroes—both clergy and lay people, ranging from committed members of resistance movements to ordinary citizens who found the strength to show more or less efficient compassion—revitalized the whole body and prevented its spiritual decay and death. After the statement was released, there were protests noting that five hundred French priests had been deported by the Nazis for helping Jews, and that Jewish groups had warmly and repeatedly thanked the Church, from the Pope on down, for its activities on their behalf across Europe during the war.

The Drancy Declaration does not ignore the courage of many Christians in German-occupied France. The questions it raises is whether this virtuous minority should now be considered as sufficiently representative of what the Church should stand for but will always (as a human society) prove unable fully to do. Divine love is interpersonal in its essence. Righteousness does not fundamentally depend on belonging to the right community (although this may certainly help). God does not weigh the merits and shortcomings of a national (or local) Church to find out whether its individual members deserve to be justified. In short, people have souls; communities don't. Yet the latter do play a key role, be it merely instrumental or anticipative, in individual moral choices, inasmuch as people need to be taught about God's law of love and its implications in particular circumstances.

In this respect, the question is whether the bishops who were pastorally responsible for the local churches on whose territory the Nazi persecution of Jews occurred carried out their ecclesial duty by warning their flock (and all others who were willing to hear) of the moral and spiritual stakes. The answer given in the Declaration on the basis of historical studies is that, although a few bishops did expose the mass arrests of Jews as both un-Christian and inhuman, most church leaders thought they had other, more important priorities. They avoided confronting the occupiers so as to remain able to keep on performing their immediate ministerial tasks and implementing their pastoral policies of evangelization.

What was so sinful? many asked when they heard the successors of these bishops contend that this was a serious failure. After all, most French people did much the same: they did not support the Nazis, but simply struggled to survive and do what little they could when doing more was almost unthinkable.

In response, today's prelates assert, first, that as the successors of Christ's apostles bishops have special responsibilities. Pastoral routines, however generous or thoughtful, may lead to short-sightedness, a fatal spiritual weakness. The Church leaders' duty is not simply to make sure that the ecclesial institutions keep purring along. It also includes moral discernment, which means enlightening human conscience and calling evil by its name when people wonder whether or not to resist it. At this level, the Declaration should be understood not as an exercise in self-humiliation but as a claim of the Church to the right and duty to exert a permanent moral magisterium.

The second and perhaps more troublesome reason why today's French bishops decided to deplore their predecessors' passivity is that there seem to have been among those predecessors disturbing doubts about the reality of the evil they should have denounced. In other words, the mostly tacit anti-Semitism deeply rooted in French Catholicism is very likely to have contributed to the Church's relative inactivity. Prior to the Second Vatican Council many among the faithful believed that Jews had knowingly rejected the Messiah they had been waiting for and were culpable for Christ's execution. Even if they were not actively to be persecuted, it was thought only fair that they should somehow be made to pay—even to the end of time—for this dreadful collective sin. The Nazi extermination plan could thus confusedly appear as simply one more materialization of this supposedly indelible curse.

The Declaration did not mention that the Vichy regime was, to a certain extent, a revenge of the anti-Dreyfusards on the pro-Dreyfusards. At the turn of the century, Alfred Dreyfus, a Jewish army captain, had been unjustly accused of espionage for Germany, and his successive trials had triggered heated controversies. Most Catholics had instinctively considered Dreyfus as guilty: the patriotic and devout top brass who prosecuted him could not be wrong on so grave a matter, and a Jew, who could not be genuinely French in any case, could easily be a traitor. But Dreyfus was innocent, and when this was proved the humiliation of those who had blindly condemned him was inestimable. Many supporters of the Vichy regime that took over in 1940 were the sons or heirs of anti-Dreyfusards. This explains why so many Catholics failed to react or to see any special evil when the occupying Germans demanded the new government's participation in their anti-Jewish policies.

Since Vatican II, mainstream Catholics in France have striven to "open up to modernity" and to forget that their grandfathers were anti-Semitic nationalists and that their fathers failed to detect

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what was wrong with Vichy. The Drancy Declaration has made almost everyone uneasy, because it recalls uncomfortable truths and asserts that only an uncompromising memory of the past will make reconciliation possible.

But the Declaration does not aim merely at settling old accounts among the French. Its relevance reaches far beyond the regional borders and the context of the end of a painful century. It is first a turning point in Christian-Jewish relationships: now that mutual misunderstandings have been overcome thanks to the confession of past sins, the arduous task of reciprocal comprehension may proceed. No little is at stake, since Christianity can hardly envision itself without assimilating its Jewish origins and confronting the continued existence and vitality of Judaism.

The Declaration also follows the recognition by the Vatican of the scientific contributions of Galileo and Darwin, and more generally accompanies the great movement of assessment and conversion initiated by Pope John Paul II as the 2000 Jubilee nears. That event, after all, will be essentially Christian—the beginning of the third millennium of the Christian era. The French bishops' initiative can be read as one sign among many that the Church will not give up its responsibility to demonstrate that religious faith is at the very heart of human life and history.

JEAN DUCHESNE *is Professor of English Literature and Civilization at Condorcet College in Paris, and cofounder of the French edition of* Communio.

Good Restaurants In Gomorrah

R. R. Reno

We scratch where it itches and even the most casual observer of the Episcopal Church knows that homosexuality is where we itch. As a Deputy to the 1997 General Convention of the Episcopal Church held in Philadelphia, I got more than a passing view. The legislative committee responsible for a wide range of social concerns shut down all other issues until the final days of the Convention. We had to deal with all the minutiae of the Episcopal Church's struggle with homosexuality before we could consider things like partial-birth abortion or school choice. The outgoing Presiding Bishop, Edmond Browning, delivered a parting speech that gave particular attention, in a litany of fashionable causes, to gay liberation. The new Presiding Bishop, Frank T. Griswold III, was hailed as a moderate solely because he seems unwilling to destroy the denomination tomorrow in order to ensure the blessing of same-sex unions.

The sheer dominance of the homosexual issue at the Convention forced me think through some fragmented ideas I have had for a long while. How is it that the gay agenda has become the defining feature of the Episcopal Church? The key to any clarity on this issue is the fact that the Episcopal Church is dominated by upper-middle-class concerns. We are the crowd which, even if we do not read the *New Yorker*, know people who do. We are the people who, even if we did not go to an Ivy League university, would be thrilled if our children do. Sexual liberation is most definitely high on the list of upper-middle-class concerns. The well-educated, well-off segment of American society has exploited the collapse of sexual taboos in a prudent way. College students enjoy a very safe environment for sexual exploration. Unwanted pregnancies are either avoided through intelligent use of birth control or terminated with abortions. Men tend not to be violent toward women or shamelessly exploitive. As a result, upper-middle-class people seem able to enjoy a relative sexual freedom that is consistent with eventually marrying and having (by contemporary standards) stable families.

Because of this prevailing experience, advocates of further liberation are not threatening. The gay lobby, while unappealing in some of its excesses, is fundamentally congenial to the sensibilities of upper-middle-class Americans. The typical Episcopalian is not very likely to be enthusiastic about the homosexual agenda. Some urban parishes have made gay liberation part of their social justice platform, but this is really rather rare. But that is not the point. The experience of many bourgeois Americans is that it was okay to sleep with your girlfriends or boyfriends—it didn't destroy their lives. So, they reason, the old taboos really were unnecessarily strict, just as gay advocates claim. "Hey," says the average Episcopalian, "if we can neglect the Scriptures on matters of fornication, adultery, and divorce, then why not homosexuality?"

Off to the General Convention goes the so-called "moderate" who simply assumes that the gay agenda is part of a largely sensible cultural adjustment of sexual mores. That moderate might vote against specific initiatives because they could "harm the church." After all, one must be careful not to frighten the horses. But as the hermetic world of lawyers and doctors and academics and social workers and other professionals becomes more and more tolerant of homosexuality, the "moderate" finds less and less to worry about. We can change church practice to accommodate homosexuality, moderates think, without disturbing the typical Episcopalian. "I don't know anybody who would really object to this," they reason. So we drift with upper-middle-class culture.

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None of this has much to do with the shrill demands for "inclusion" and all the empty rhetoric about how we need to change in order to be a church for all people. The theme of "liberation" makes our fixation on homosexuality seem like a continuation of the Social Gospel tradition. But the gay agenda in the Episcopal Church is primarily about upper-middle-class professionals securing recognition and affirmation. For us, homosexuality is not about the evils of "heterocentric culture"; it's about the sexual freedoms of our kind of people. We are blind to the realities of American sexual degradation. We see everything in terms of the indulgent but sensible world of the well-educated and well-intentioned.

In our little world, homosexuality seems like just another modest revision of traditional Christian moral strictness. But I think our class identity is magnified to its current point of crisis by geography. Official ecclesiastical documents have referred to certain "regional differences" in the debate over homosexuality. This is often accompanied by insinuations that southern and rural areas are (you guessed it) bigoted in contrast to progressive East and West Coast areas. The explanation of the difference may be specious, but the differences are real. Certain dioceses have a zeal for the gay agenda, and if we are to grasp the centrality of homosexuality in the Episcopal Church, then we need to understand this zeal.

Those of us outside of the Northeast are likely to miss one important institutional reality in the Episcopal Church: as a historically prominent denomination, we have a huge inventory of glorious (and endowed) church buildings in urban areas. For example, in Philadelphia there are at least six Episcopal Churches within walking distance of City Hall. Since the race riots of the 1960s and the tremendous decline of the quality of life in urban areas in the last three decades, nearly all families who could afford to leave urban areas for suburban enclaves have done so. The city cores of places like Philadelphia contain a vast population of poor and near-poor, with inner-city enclaves of single professionals (and some elderly folks who have hung on from the old glory days) in gentrified neighborhoods. The typical constituency of a prosperous Episcopal parish—upper-middle-class families—are largely absent. Young single professionals typically move to the suburbs after they marry and have children. How can the urban parishes with their Tiffany windows and silver chalices be anything more than ecclesiastical museums?

Of course, a downtown church could try to draw its members from the far larger population of poor or near-poor urban residents, but we have ample historical evidence that our church fails in that regard. So, if you are a pastor who wants to breathe life into a nearly empty endowed parish, then you must recruit from the long-term downtown constituency or find a way to draw committed folks in from the suburbs. A great deal of fashionable liberalism is designed to give a parish a "special mission" that will motivate suburban residents to travel into the city.

Much of the gay agenda is driven by a similar imperative of church survival. Professional gays and lesbians are far more likely to be long-term urban residents, and as a result, however statistically small in the larger scheme of urban life, they are a significant pool of potential members for a downtown Episcopal church. As a result, then, some of the largest East Coast dioceses have a number of parishes that combine a "social justice" ministry with acceptance of gay membership in order to tap both sources of upper-middle-class membership. In this way, a rector might transform a sixty member congregation devoted to ancestor worship ("Mrs. Chittendon's grandfather was a devoted vestry man") into a two hundred member parish with some vitality and energy. And in effecting such a transformation, a priest and a bishop could well feel that the Holy Spirit is at work breathing life into a seemingly hopelessly diminished set of urban churches.

Next thing you know, these folks are at General Convention telling you that Holy Spirit is leading the church into a new way of "being the church," and you are doing your best to remind them that the Holy Spirit leads us into the depths of Scripture, not beyond it. That's been my story. It took me a while to figure out that all this loose talk about the Holy Spirit is not just mendacious. Supporters of the gay agenda really are responding to "successes" in urban parishes. The problem is that they are unable to see how their distortion of Christianity into a pastorally sensitive response to upper-middle-class American preoccupations, a distortion long ago recognized by critics of the Episcopal Church, so dramatically limits our range of potential members. In the past, we were the Republican Party at prayer; now we are the ACLU at prayer. Our class identity has not changed. If anything, the sensibilities that animate the ACLU are even more exclusively upper middle class than the old *haute bourgeois* mores of an earlier time.

The growing success of the gay agenda in the Episcopal Church practically guarantees that we will become even more rigidly and exclusively class-defined. Homosexuality is not limited to the professional classes, but our stunning complacency about the power and perversion of human sexual impulses is, I think, unique to those who have the good fortune to be socialized into the benevolent repressions of well-off suburban life. We think we can tuck new sexual freedoms into the traditional patterns of career and civic responsibility. We are confident that the culture of Volvo station wagons and the country day schools can absorb the novelty of homosexuality. And maybe we are right. After all, upper-middle-class culture survived the collapse of taboos against divorce. To be sure, lots of folks were maimed en

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route, but the children still went off to Yale when the time came.

So I left the General Convention with a double dismay: one familiar and the other new. I came to the General Convention knowing how far gone we are. After all, just last year we tried a bishop for heresy and the court decided that the Episcopal Church is committed to a Gospel so vague and spectral that false teaching is impossible. The only heresy is to say that there is such a thing as heresy. But the full force of the gay agenda nevertheless surprised me. And by that I do not mean the postmodern clichés about heterosexism and the fantasies of unlimited erotic self-expression. No, the surprise was the sheer ordinariness of it all. Our complacent acceptance was so relentlessly class-bound. In the past, I kidded myself that our class identity as a denomination was the result of historical circumstances and institutional inertia. Now I am forced to recognize that we are drawing inward upon ourselves as a matter of policy. I found myself despairing: will *anybody* not coddled with the highest advantages and privileges of our society be attracted to a denomination that preaches sexual freedom with such blissful naiveté?

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A Fear of Abandonment

Russell E. Saltzman

I still enjoy telling the story of my adoption. I was a "gray market" baby in 1947, a private arrangement made between birth mother, doctor, lawyer, and adoptive parents. The attending physician had arranged to telephone the good news to the waiting couple, my parents—something like, "Congratulations. Sixteen years from now you'll have a teenager who wants his driver's license."

Unfortunately the Kansas City, Kansas, telephone operators were on strike. That was back in the days when, upon picking up the receiver, one heard "Number please?" and with the operators out the doctor sent a telegram. "Come quick," it read. "Baby boy born this 9:00 A.M."

The family story of how my adoptive mother left her home and raced two blocks up the hill on north Steward Avenue off Parallel then down a steeper hill to her aunt's house, excitedly waving the doctor's telegram, has become more elaborate year to year, at least in her sister's telling. The gist of it, though, appears that she arrived breathless, grandly flourished the telegram before her sisters and aunt, complained that having a baby was tough work and she needed a rest, whereupon she flopped down on a bed, arms and legs akimbo.

It was happy news for my adoptive parents, but that telegram proved terribly confusing to me. My folks kept it on page one in my baby book. As a young child I thumbed through that book frequently. When other kids started pondering the true origin of babies, I announced my firm conviction—citing documentary evidence—that babies originated with Western Union. Lou Ann, my sixth grade girlfriend, kindly took me aside on the playground to hint at other means, but I didn't believe her.

I've since gleaned more accurate information about where babies come from, but one fact from that telegram remains with me: I am adopted. There was never a time when I did not know I was adopted. It was a given, a fact calmly declared in public and in private, something in which to exult. In my very young years I remember feeling what now seems like a foolish kind of specialness, even a superiority over "ordinary" kids in being adopted. "But how did you find me?" I would plead. And my mother would tell how she and my father picked me, only me, from a huge room simply brimming with babies. They carefully looked at each one—"No, that's not our baby," they would say to each other—until, when they had almost given up, they at last found that one, just that one baby they knew God intended for them. Me.

I did worry about those other babies. What if no one found them quite as delightfully perfect as my parents had found me? What would happen to them? I was reassured to learn that for every baby in that room brimming with babies, special parents and a new home were waiting. Or so my mother told me.

For all the specialness that I and my adoptive parents found, I have yet at the same time always wondered about my birth parents. Just as I cannot remember a time when I did not know I was adopted, I cannot remember a time when I did not speculate about those other people. To say this takes nothing from my parents, my real parents, the ones who adopted, reared, and love me still, and who are well into their seventies, both living active lives. But it is to say that from my earliest years I have mulled over those others who, in different circumstances, would have been my real parents. I have wondered, in short, why I was given up for adoption, and for reasons I cannot explain, my questioning has always concerned my birth mother, seldom my birth father.

I never looked too hard, really, but while in my late twenties I did learn that she lived in Kansas City. The information I gained on my birth father puts my birth mother's decision for adoption in perspective. He was young, a soldier from Ft. Leavenworth. I was conceived in the late summer of 1946, less than a year

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after the close of World War II. I have their names—Robert and Faye—and their addresses, now fifty years out of date.

This information, little as it was, satisfied me at age twenty-seven. From it I fashioned in my mind a failed romance between a young Kansas City girl, sixteen at my birth, and a lonely, nineteen-year-old left-over World War II enlistee stationed at Ft. Leavenworth. Dashing, they were, Robert and Faye, and evidently star-crossed, as my imagination has pictured them all these years; kids, that's all, just teenagers. She vulnerable and pretty and foolish, obviously vulnerable enough and foolish enough to let her head get turned by—well, he was, wasn't he?—a handsome guy in a uniform. He, again in my imagination, perhaps was far from home, seeking company. Ft. Leavenworth is not a great place for a weekend pass. Kansas City is the place to be, the Kansas side if your pass doesn't let you cross the state line into Missouri. And there they met (at a soda fountain?), a fateful meeting that led to the assignation that led to me. Or perhaps they attended Wyandotte County High School together—Robert was only eighteen in 1946—and being romantically incautious while he was on leave, that was how I came to be. It could have happened like that.

But they were young, too young to take on the responsibilities of a marriage and a child all at once, no matter how desperately they might have wanted it otherwise. So on the best advice of family and friends I was given up, tearfully I imagined, to what they both prayed would be a better life than they, she, could provide. All that was my imagination, never too detailed and just vague enough to avoid more critical questioning.

Some adoptees never get over questioning why they were surrendered for adoption, why their parents could not have kept them and raised them and loved them for their own. No matter the childhood tales of being especially chosen, no matter the practical realities one becomes aware of later that make adoption desirable, the question lingers because it is so intensely personal. What was so bad about me that she did not want me, would not love me? What were the hardships she faced that could not be overcome . . . for me?

For me the fact of adoption still echoes with such questions. There is—I have no other description but one that sounds clichéd—a sometimes deep empty place, a hole into which I fall in times of personal stress. I deal cautiously with people; I am friendly but reserved. A fear of abandonment, I was once told, a fear of rejection, of death. It flairs up unbidden, the slightest of things innocently said nonetheless strikes deep in my being, momentarily overpowering my intellectualizations. It can be very hard on the people I love best and God knows what it contributed to the breakup of my first marriage. All of it comes from knowing that in my earliest moments, they who should have loved me best gave me up to others.

Some years ago, I wrote about being adopted, the first time I had ever made public comments on the subject. In that essay, too, I told of the imaginary scenario I had constructed in my mind: pretty girl, lonely soldier, failed romance, doomed love. Writing about it stimulated all the old, nagging questions I thought settled. They have unexpectedly resurfaced.

I know more now of my birth.

My birth father indeed was a young soldier at Ft. Leavenworth. His family forced his enlistment after he impregnated (raped?) his sixteen-year-old step-sister, my birth mother. I am the result of sexual predation, of step-sibling incest. I never knew why my mother could not keep me, would not keep me. Now I know, and the knowledge has been comforting, in a way. I learned it and, strangely perplexed that this need never arose before, I forgave her.

But the knowledge has also left me uncomfortably disconcerted. No longer was my birth the result of an ill-fated romantic liaison. It was something else, alien and other, distasteful. Now I know beyond question, I was not abandoned to adoption. I was rescued by it.

When I acquired my birth-parents' names and addresses twenty-four years ago I did it thinking to seek out my mother. I decided otherwise, to respect her privacy, to avoid hurting my parents, for a number of reasons. But it was also just after *Roe v. Wade,* when the enormity of abortion was gaining a sharper clarity. Her privacy was one thing, but there was another reason too. I feared a second rejection, feared hearing in some form or other that had she had the choice in 1947, she would have chosen abortion. With my romantic fiction, I at least had the notion that given a choice she might have chosen me, the child that she and Robert made in love. But I was not made in love, and possibly I was conceived in violence. Would she today have hesitated over abortion?

As the abortion business has become ever bigger in the years since, I have grimly pondered the fate of Faye's pregnancy were it to occur now under circumstances like those of a half century ago. The law then protected me. Not today. Today, hers would be a "problem pregnancy," a "crisis pregnancy," an "unwanted pregnancy."

It was all that of course and more in 1947. Carrying her pregnancy, thinking of me in her womb, might have been awful in different moments. But there were more social supports for young women with "problems" like that. Society may have regarded unmarried pregnant girls with less compassion or tolerance than today, but their babies lived. Whatever the difficulty, the shame, the discomfort, the fear; whatever dread she experienced, whatever she endured was worth it for her, for me, for my own children. I was born. The laws, the courts, the physicians, the churches, all worked to insure that once Faye was

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pregnant, I would be born.

Not today. Today, not even my own church, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, is able to say flatly that unborn babies like me should live. No woman has an absolute right to abortion, so my church declares in its social statement on abortion. But it goes on, conversely, to say that no fetus has an absolute right to birth. The woman decides—after of course appropriate moral reflection with sympathetic listeners, but she decides. Pregnancies created in circumstances such as those of Faye and Robert in 1947 are in 1998 fair targets for "morally responsible" abortions, according to my church. Even stranger, were either Robert or Faye or their parents beneficiaries under the ELCA health plan (which means pastors and salaried church workers and their dependents), Faye's 1998 abortion would be a reimbursable medical expense. The ELCA health plan will not pay for an elective breast implant but, under the right conditions, will pay to abort someone like me. When it comes to my birth the church that values my baptism is ambivalent at best about my right to life in the womb.

Abortion is personal to me, as personal as my adoption. It is personal not only to the woman who aborts, but to me; to me, to the unborn children like me, it is personal. It is our person that is in jeopardy.

Fear of abandonment, the psychiatrist told me, fear of rejection, of death. Gosh, whatever gave her that idea?

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Landscapes

Cracks in the pavement,
potholes pebbled with cold mix:
ice-hardened tires thump and jar.

Grip the wheel tightly;
hubcaps litter the street.
This is the season of lost pieces.

Thread carefully through the debris,
the frozen plastic
and the scraps of metal.

Streets fall apart,
paint flakes from the fenders,
axles bounce and bend,

and all we can do
is watch the rear view mirror
straining for a glimpse of summer

or wait for signs of hope—Men Working—
when suddenly the streets
flower with orange barrels in the spring.

Phoebe S. Spinrad

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John Paul II and the Priority of Culture

George Weigel

That no good deed goes unpunished is nicely illustrated by the terms in which several biographers have recognized Pope John Paul II as a seminal figure in the Revolution of 1989.

Thus Carl Bernstein and Marco Politi, in their 1996 book, *His Holiness: John Paul II and the Hidden History of Our Time*, argue that, yes, the Pope played a large role in the collapse of European communism—as coconspirator with the Reagan Administration in a "holy alliance" that wedded the diplomacy of the Holy See to the anti-Communist passions of conservative Republicans and the wiles of the CIA. Jonathan Kwitny agrees with the basic proposition that "1989" cannot be understood without taking account of the Polish pontiff, but his 1997 biography, *Man of the Century*, inverts the Bernstein/Politi proposition by arguing that the Pope, a nonviolent revolutionary on the model of Gandhi and Martin Luther King, Jr., pulled the whole thing off against the machinations of the Reaganites and the CIA.

What these and similar journalistic accounts tend to discount, unfortunately, is the Pope's own reading of "the history of our time," whose locus classicus is the 1991 encyclical, *Centesimus Annus*. There, John Paul argued that "1989" could not be understood through the conventional analytic categories of Realpolitik. Rather, "1989" was made possible by a prior moral and cultural revolution, which created the conditions for the possibility of the nonviolent political upheaval that swept Marxism-Leninism into the dustbin of European history. The Pope was hardly unaware of the political, military, and economic factors that contributed to the breach of the Berlin Wall on November 10, 1989. But, he suggested, if we want to grasp why "1989" happened when it did and how it did, a deeper reading of the dynamics of history and a more acute analysis of the twentieth-century crisis of European civilization are required. Against the Realist school of historiography and international relations theory, in both its left- and right-wing forms, John Paul argued for the priority of culture over politics and economics as the engine of historical change; and at the heart of culture, he proposed, is cult, or religion.

In the years after *Centesimus Annus*, John Paul II has insisted that what was true of the epic changes we call "1989" is also true for the consolidation of free societies in Central and Eastern Europe, and for the well-being of the established democracies of the West. Democratic polities and free economies, he argues, are not independent variables; absent the habits of mind and heart that make people democrats and that channel their economic energies to good ends, the free society risks becoming a "thinly-disguised totalitarianism" (as he put it in the most controversial section of *Centesimus Annus*). The tendency, even among some celebrants of the Pope's role in "1989," has been to dismiss this as so much pontifical rodomontade; and the tone-deaf Western media have generally agreed that these are the cranky protestations of an angry old man incapable of understanding the world he helped create (see, for example, Tad Szulc in his 1995 effort, *Pope John Paul II: The Biography*).

But two papal pilgrimages in mid-1997—to Poland in June, and to the 12th World Youth Day in Paris in August—provided ample evidence that John Paul II's reading of contemporary history has not lost its salience, nor has it been blunted in its capacity to generate historical change. Moreover, the Pope's reorientation of Catholic evangelism and social doctrine toward the conversion of culture has given him a distinctive understanding of the requirements of freedom in the third millennium—which he insists, against the backdrop of this fast-closing century of unprecedented wickedness, can be a "springtime of the human spirit."

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II

The Pope's June 1997 journey through his Polish homeland took place under two shadows. The first was the memory of his 1991 Polish pilgrimage, the first after the Communist crack-up, which was widely (and accurately) regarded as the least successful of his visits to his native country. In retrospect, it is possible to see just how difficult the situation was in those heady days. Poles were still intoxicated with their new freedom and wanted to celebrate it with the man to whom they gave credit for their deliverance; but the prescient Pope, who had quickly decoded the new threats to freedom implicit in the value-neutral notion of democracy being exported to east central Europe from the West, wanted to talk about the dangers he saw ahead. The Polish hierarchy had not found an appropriate voice to make its presence felt in the new circumstances of democratic pluralism, particularly on the heated issue of abortion; neither had Catholic politicians who wanted to think with the Church, but who resented being instructed in their duties by bishops who seemed unable to distinguish their episcopal role from that of party bosses. The net result was a tense visit, full of controversies, in which the fervor and the sense of national unity demonstrated in the Pope's 1979, 1983, and 1987 pilgrimages was often absent. This unhappy memory hung heavily over anticipations of the Pope's June 1997 return home.

The second shadow was Poland's recent political history. In September 1993 a coalition led by ex-Communists won the national parliamentary elections and took power in the Sejm. Two years later, on November 19, 1995, Alexander Kwasniewski, the youthful (and, some might say, Clintonesque) founder of the Democratic Left Alliance, defeated Lech Walesa for the presidency of Poland. Walesa's erratic behavior in the years since 1989 made his dismissal by the electorate understandable; but the fact that it was understandable made it no less disconcerting. The icon of the Solidarity revolution had been displaced by a former Communist party apparatchik: what had happened to the brave dreams on which "1989" had been built? Is this what happened in a "normal society"?

The combination of these two factors, and concerns about John Paul's health, made for considerable nervousness prior to the Pope's arrival. Would a pilgrimage that might turn out to be the Pope's farewell fail?

In the event, the pilgrimage was a triumph; as one exuberant Polish Dominican put it, "He's done it again; it's like 1979." But what, precisely, had he done?

The eleven days between John Paul's arrival on May 31 and his departure on June 10 were, to be sure, full of emotion and drama. The Pope struck a sympathetic chord and immediately re-connected with his countrymen when he said, at the arrival ceremony in Wroclaw, that he had come to them "as a pilgrim . . . filled with profound emotion," because "every return to Poland is like a return to the family home, where the smallest objects remind us of what is closest and dearest to our hearts." Three days later, at Gorzow Wielkopolski, John Paul reminded an immense throng that the late primate, Cardinal Stefan Wyszynski, had told him just after he had been elected pope that "You are to lead the Church into its Third Millennium," and requested that they "ask God on your knees . . . that I am able to meet this challenge." (The crowd chanted back, "We will help you!"—a phrase that conjured up memories of strikers in 1970 responding to the pleas of the new Communist prime minister, Gierek; the Pope answered the chant with a moment of papal whimsy: "I recognize the words but I hope it will be better this time.")

Then there was Mass at Zakopane, the ski resort in the Pope's beloved Tatra Mountains. The mayor, in traditional Polish highlander dress, knelt before John Paul on June 6 to thank him for "freeing us from the 'red slavery' and for teaching us how to eradicate from our Polish homeland all that is degrading, humiliating, and all that enslaves us." After Mass, when the tough, craggy Polish mountain people began to sing to John Paul an old folk song about a highlander going into exile ("Mountaineer, why do you leave your beautiful hills and silvery brooks?"), one would have been hard-put to find a dry eye among the half-million present, including the Pope.

For eleven days, John Paul (who seemed to get stronger as the visit unfolded) worked the crowds masterfully. When hundreds of thousands of youngsters in Poznan began to chant *Sto lat!* ("May you live a hundred years!"), he was quick to reply, "Don't flatter the Pope so much; you'd better think about Paris [the upcoming World Youth Day]." And, more poignantly, when an enormous congregation at the shrine of Czestochowa, home of the Black Madonna, began to chant, "Long live the Pope," John Paul wryly responded, "He does, he does, and he grows older. . . ."

But the meaning of the Pope's Polish pilgrimage should not be measured simply by the colossal crowds, with over 1.2 million in Krakow alone on June 8, when the Pope canonized Blessed Queen Jadwiga, co-foundress of the Jagiello dynasty. As in any papal event, what ultimately counts—what historians must finally deal with—are the texts. And the twenty-six major texts of this pilgrimage, taken together, spelled out John Paul's distinctive vision of the priority of culture over politics and economics and his Vatican II-driven sense of the "public Church" as, essentially, the shaper of culture.

The June pilgrimage was deliberately filled with images of Poland's Christian past: a pan-Central European celebration of the millennium of the mar-

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tyrdom of St. Adalbert, held in Gniezno; the canonization of Jadwiga; the commemoration in Krakow of the 600th anniversary of the Jagiellonian University's theology department. But this constant evocation of the past was not an exercise in pious nostalgia; rather, it was anamnesis in the service of the present and the future. As the Pope put it at the departure ceremony on June 10, "Fidelity to roots does not mean a mechanical copying of the patterns of the past. Fidelity to roots is always creative, ready to descend into the depths, open to new challenges, alert to the 'signs of the times.' . . . Fidelity to roots means above all the ability to create an organic synthesis of perennial values, confirmed so often in history, and the challenge of today's world: faith and culture, the Gospel and life." And that, he said, was why he had wanted to celebrate the canonizations of Jadwiga and John of Dukla, as well as two beatifications, during his pilgrimage: because "the Church's saints are a particular revelation of the loftiest horizons of human freedom."

The canonization of Jadwiga afforded perhaps the greatest temptation to forget present and future in a binge about Poland's glorious past. But the Pope stoutly resisted this, and his canonization sermon focused on the fourteenth-century queen as a model for Poland today and tomorrow: Jadwiga the queen, for whom power was a question of public service; Jadwiga the diplomat, working to build a community of nations in east central Europe; Jadwiga the patroness of culture, "aware that faith seeks rational understanding," who endowed the university that bears her dynastic name with a gift of her golden scepter; Jadwiga, born to wealth and privilege, whose "sensitivity to social wrongs was often praised by her subjects." The message to Poland's new democracy could not have been clearer: you are the inheritors of a great cultural tradition, and it is that tradition that will enable you to build a genuinely free society worthy of the half century of sacrifice you made in the name of freedom.

At the commemoration of the 600th anniversary of the Jagiellonian University faculty of theology, held in the collegiate church of St. Anne later that same day, John Paul sent another signal about the Church's relationship to politics. As it happens, Karol Wojtyla was the last student to receive a doctorate from the Jagiellonian University theology faculty before it was shut down by the Communist regime in early 1954; and the struggle to sustain serious theological scholarship in Krakow had been one of the hallmarks of his time as cardinal-archbishop of the city. So it might have been expected that the Pope would take the occasion of this anniversary celebration to say something about Poland's upcoming parliamentary elections, in which the heirs of the suppressors of the Jagiellonian faculty of theology were contestants. John Paul minced no words about "the dramatic struggle for existence" that that faculty had gone through "at the time of the Communist dictatorship." And he reminded the congregation (composed of Poland's leading intellectuals and educators, many of them his old friends) that the Church had "never resigned herself to the fact of a unilateral and unjust suppression" of the theology faculty by the Communist regime.

But this was not, he said, a matter of the Church's offended amour propre. Rather, in terms reminiscent of Newman's *Idea of a University*, he insisted that the defense of the theological faculty was a defense of the integrity of the intellectual life, a defense of culture, and a defense of the nation. The Church was not protesting the abuse of an ancient ecclesiastical privilege; by fighting for theology's place in the academy, the Church "did everything in her power to ensure that the university environment of Krakow was not deprived of an academic *studium* of theology" that had made its own "contribution to the development of Polish learning and culture." And a culture cut off from transcendent reference points could not serve the human good, because it could not know the truth about man.

Indeed, the Pope's richly textured address at St. Anne's, in which the politics of the present moment was not mentioned once, seemed to be saying to all concerned (within and without the Church), that while politics was undoubtedly important, the nurturance of culture, especially in the life of the mind, was far more important. You think that parliamentary elections will decide Poland's future? No, the Pope suggested, Poland's future really depends on "a lively awareness" that "man does not create truth; rather, truth discloses itself to man when he perseveringly seeks it." That is what universities are supposed to do. That is why universities are, over time, of far more consequence to a nation than parliaments. And that is why the Church, embodied in her supreme pontiff, is reflecting with you on the meaning of true humanism, that "integral notion of the human person" that is a "condition for the sound development" of the intellectual life, rather than telling you for whom to vote.

Five days before, at Gniezno, John Paul had delivered a similar message about the free society's dependence on a vibrant public moral culture to the presidents of Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Lithuania, Ukraine, and Germany: all new (or newly reunified) democracies. Politics was not just a matter of winning elections, he reminded them, nor was the success of economic reform to be measured solely by the indices of gross national product. Rather, "the greatness of the role of political leaders is to act always with respect for the dignity of every human being, to create the conditions of a generous solidarity which never marginalizes any citizen, to permit each individual to have access to culture, to recognize and put into practice the loftiest

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human and spiritual values, to profess and to share one's religious beliefs." The Realpolitik of amoral power had given Europe "this sorely tried century." The birth of a new Europe capable of responding "to its age-old vocation in the world" depended on a European rediscovery of the continent's ancient "cultural and religious roots."

Prior to the Pope's arrival, the scent of a valedictory was in the air. Eleven dramatic and intellectually challenging days later, speculation had already begun about a papal visit in 1998, this time to the Baltic region (where Solidarity was born) and to the Mazurian Lakes where Father Karol Wojtyla loved to kayak. It may not have been "1979 again," as my enthusiastic Polish friend suggested. But John Paul's politics of culture (combined with terminal ex-Communist incompetence in the face of catastrophic floods in Poland in July) had their effect: in September, the voters threw out the ex-Communists and elected a new parliament led by a reconfigured Solidarity coalition.

That parliament is now the steward of Europe's fastest growing economy and east central Europe's most stable polity. And so the great Polish experiment will continue: can democratic pluralism and a free economy be built and sustained on the basis of an intact Catholic culture? That John Paul II gave Poles and Polish culture a living past rather than a nostalgic past during his June 1997 pilgrimage bodes well for a positive answer to that historic question.

III

The evangelical potency of the Pope's "culture first" approach to the "Church in the modern world" was also on display in Paris during the 12th World Youth Day in August 1997.

On his first pastoral visit to France in the spring of 1980, John Paul II, whose affection for the Gallic "Eldest Daughter of the Church" and her culture dates back to his student days, shocked a congregation of 350,000 at LeBourget Airport by bluntly asking, "France . . . are you faithful to the promises of your baptism? France, Daughter of the Church and educator of peoples, are you faithful, for the good of man, to the covenant with eternal wisdom?" Seven months later, the Pope acted on his judgment that the revitalization of French Catholicism was an urgent pastoral need by making what has been, arguably, the boldest episcopal nomination of his pontificate: the appointment of Jean-Marie Lustiger, son of Polish-Jewish parents, as archbishop of Paris.

Lustiger, who converted to Catholicism as a teenager, had been an innovative student chaplain at the Sorbonne and a Parisian pastor before being named Bishop of Orléans, where he spent a mere thirteen months before his translation to Paris. During his years as chaplain and pastor, Lustiger and a group of young lay intellectuals developed a distinctive analysis of the historical and cultural situation of the French Church. Prior to the French Revolution, the Church in France had been a "Church of power," allied to the political order and in some sense dependent on it. Then came 1789 and the subsequent Terror, during which French Catholicism took the first and (until the twentieth century) hottest blast from secular modernity. Reeling from that massive and bloody assault, the Church divided. A restorationist faction sought the return of the ancien régime—at first tout court; later, when the monarchist option became politically untenable, culturally. This faction produced, over time, the extremism of Action Française, Petainism during World War II, and, ultimately, Lefebvrism in the post-Vatican II period. The counter-faction sought an accommodation with secularity and the political left, and eventually gave birth to the bizarre phenomenon of "Christian Marxism." The bitter contestation between these two factions had divided French Catholics for over 150 years and had drained the Church of its evangelical vigor.

The creativity of the Lustiger group's analysis lay in its claim that these two factions, far from being the polar opposites they claimed themselves to be, were in fact two variants on the same false option: the determination to be a "Church of power." The two factions differed, of course, on what form of political power was preferable as a partner for the Church. But both agreed (although they could never admit it to each other) that to be the Church in France *must* mean to be a "Church of power."

Lustiger and his friends disagreed. It was the marriage with power, they believed, that had made the Church so vulnerable to the assault of secular modernity. Nor was there any way to mediate between the claims of the accommodationist and restorationist factions: the restorationists regarded *Dignitatis Humanae*, Vatican II's Declaration on Religious Freedom, as heresy (for declaring the state theologically incompetent), while the accommodationists had mistaken the Council's opening to the modern world (in *Gaudium et Spes*) as an invitation to cohabit with Marxism and, later, postmodernist deconstruction, both of which led in short order to the dissolution of Christian orthodoxy.

In these circumstances, the Lustiger group proposed, the only option was the evangelical option: to abandon the pretense of power, to eschew alliances with any political force, and to bring France back to her baptismal promises, not through the mediation of politics but through the reconversion of culture. And this, in turn, meant taking the evangelical proposition straight to the molders and shapers of culture: the by-now thoroughly secularized French intelligentsia. After his accession to Paris, Lustiger began implementing this pastoral strategy of reevangelization "from the head down" in a dynamic fash-

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ion: in a slew of best-selling books, many of them addressing the possibility of faith amidst modernity; by refounding a seminary (and thus personally encouraging a more evangelically assertive Parisian presbyterate); and through a direct, personal, weekly outreach to students and the professoriate in a Sunday evening Mass and homily at his cathedral of Notre-Dame.

World Youth Day 1997 fit well into this strategy of reconversion through culture. World Youth Day would not simply happen in Paris. In the strategic vision of Cardinal Lustiger and his associates, shared by John Paul II, World Youth Day would be an integral part, perhaps even a turning point, in the reconversion of France through the evangelization of culture. Thus the Pope's contacts with the French authorities were kept to the minimum required by protocol and good manners; there was a brief welcoming meeting with President Chirac and a brief predeparture meeting with Prime Minister Jospin. But whenever John Paul appeared in public in Paris it was in an explicitly ecclesial context: his was not a "Church of power," but a Church of the Gospel whose witness to Christ compelled a defense of the rights of man.

The rhythm of the 12th World Youth Day was deliberately set by a model of pilgrimage that Lustiger had first encountered in his days as chaplain at the Sorbonne. There, Monsignor Maxim Charles, later the rector of Sacré Coeur, was reviving the French tradition of student pilgrimages with a group of young intellectuals who would later become close friends of Father Lustiger and, later, his informal advisors as archbishop. These pilgrimages, first to Notre-Dame, later to Chartres, were inspired by the theology of Louis Bouyer and his teaching that every significant Christian event should, in some fashion, recapitulate the Paschal Triduum, the core of Christian experience. Thus on every student pilgrimage, no matter at what time of the year, the retreatants would "relive" Holy Week, from Palm Sunday through the Easter Vigil.

The Bouyer-Charles paschal template was adapted to World Youth Day 1997 to great effect. Thus the first official day of the youth festival (which happened to be a Tuesday) "was" Palm Sunday: the Holy Year cross, given by John Paul II to the participants in the first World Youth Day in 1985, was solemnly carried in procession by a dozen youngsters from around the world, through a crowd of perhaps 500,000 young people stretched from the Eiffel Tower along the Champ de Mars to the front lawn of the Ecole Militaire, where a great platform had been built for the opening Mass. Thursday, when John Paul II arrived in Paris and first met the young people, was "Holy Thursday"; the Gospel read during the welcoming ceremony was John 13:1-15, the washing of the disciples' feet, which the Pope explicated to the youngsters in a text read in their language-based catechetical groups the next day. On Friday, hundreds of thousands of teenagers and young adults relived Good Friday by making the Way of the Cross at dozens of venues all over Paris. On Saturday night, a candlelight baptismal vigil was celebrated by a congregation of 750,000 at the Longchamp racecourse, as the Pope baptized twelve young catechumens from every continent. And then, after this re-creation of the Easter Vigil, came the closing Eucharist on Sunday morning, which turned out to be the largest attendance at one Mass in French history, with more than a million gathering at Longchamp.

The massive turnout far exceeded the expectations of the event's planners, who, as things got underway, were anticipating perhaps 250,000 youngsters all week, and a crowd of 500,000 for the closing Mass. At least twice that number of young people turned out, and the outpouring of interest from French teenagers stunned the Paris press, which spent the better part of the week editorially wondering what on earth was going on. One also had the sense that it stunned those French bishops who, having internalized a sense of their own marginality, were unsympathetic to Lustiger's pastoral strategy and its forthrightly evangelical approach to the keepers of the French cultural flame.

When John Paul II visited Reims in September 1996, similar skepticism about public interest was expressed but another massive turnout ensued. Then, the focus was on the Christian roots of the French nation, the occasion being the 1,500th anniversary of the baptism of Clovis. At World Youth Day, the two "icons" proposed for reflection were drawn from the modern history of French Catholicism: St. Thérèse of Lisieux, and Frederic Ozanam, founder of the worldwide St. Vincent de Paul societies, whom the Pope beatified at Notre-Dame on August 22. This choice of patrons for the papal pilgrimage to Paris was not accidental. Both were young Catholics (Thérèse died at twenty-four, Ozanam at forty). Thérèse, perhaps the most popular of modern saints, was a contemplative, a woman who made original contributions to theology. Ozanam was an intellectual in an age of radical skepticism, a democrat detached from the ancien régime fantasies of many of his coreligionists, a servant of the poor, a devoted husband and father, and an original thinker whose writings on the just society prefigured and influenced the birth of modern Catholic social doctrine in Leo XIII's *Rerum Novarum*. The message being sent through this iconography was unmistakable: sanctity is possible in modernity; youthful enthusiasm can be drawn to Christ; Catholic faith can nurture a free society (liberty), human dignity (equality), and human solidarity (fraternity).

Cardinal Lustiger drove this point home on French national television the night World Youth

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Day concluded. Asked by a middle-aged interviewer how he explained such an extraordinary response to World Youth Day, the cardinal suggested that it was a question of generations. The reporter belonged to a generation that had grown up in the Church, had lost its faith (circa 1968), and had been fighting its parents, so to speak, ever since. These young people, the cardinal said, grew up empty; they have found Jesus Christ; they want to explore all that that means. Do not, he concluded, read their lives through your experience. They do not think that being Christian and being engaged, intelligent, compassionate, dedicated people are antinomies.

Or, as the Pope put it to the young in his closing homily at Longchamp: "Go forth now along the roads of the world, along the pathways of humanity, while remaining ever united in Christ's Church. Continue to contemplate God's glory and God's love, and you will receive the enlightenment needed to build the civilization of love, to help our brothers and sisters to see the world transfigured by God's eternal wisdom and love." In the capital of a particularly skeptical and anticlerical Enlightenment, a new enlightenment of culture, leading to a new concept of the free society, was being proposed. The response suggested that World Youth Day 1997 may one day be remembered as a turning point in the modern history of France.

IV

Professor Stefan Swiezawski, the distinguished Polish historian of philosophy who was instrumental in bringing young Father Karol Wojtyla to the faculty of the Catholic University of Lublin, once said that the post-Conciliar Church was "living in a new epoch." "Vatican II was not just one Council; it marked the end of the Constantinian epoch, thank God. Now the Church has no army, no state. It is a quite different situation." Working out the implications of this post-Constantinian ecclesiology with an eye toward the third millennium of Christian history has been one of the principal leitmotifs of the pontificate of John Paul II, who played such an important role in drafting *Gaudium et Spes*, the Council's Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World.

In some respects, of course, the Church will always be engaged with "power," as the world defines power. Vatican diplomacy continues; the Holy See exchanges diplomatic representatives with 166 states and is an active participant in international legal and political institutions. What the pontificate of John Paul II has done, in fulfillment of the promise of Vatican II and its seminal Dogmatic Constitution on the Church (*Lumen Gentium*), is to locate this inevitable engagement with the principalities and powers in an explicitly evangelical context. The Church's defense of human rights (and especially the first human right of religious freedom), like its groping toward an ethic of "humanitarian intervention" in the post-Cold War world, its efforts to mediate ethnic and nationalist conflict in the Middle East and elsewhere, and its proposals for securing the moral foundations of the free society, cannot be understood merely as the Church's dealings with the "real world." In the ecclesiology and social doctrine of John Paul II, the witness of the "public Church" is an expression of the Church's essential task, which is the proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ—a Gospel with many things to say about the nature of man, of human community, and of human destiny.

The "real world" is the human universe that has been redeemed and transformed by the atoning death of the Son of God. The Church is not "here" and the "real world" there; the story of the Church is the world's story, rightly understood. This belief is what grounds the public ministry of John Paul II and directs his attention, as teacher and witness, to the realm of culture: that dimension of the human universe in which the self-understanding of individuals and peoples is formed and is transmitted to new generations. Because the Church is first and foremost evangelical, the Church must, in this post-Constantinian epoch, be the evangelizer of cultures.

This steady insistence on the priority of culture is difficult to grasp for those who read John Paul II as another great figure on a world-historical stage whose dramatic action is defined by politics. He has been that, of course. But he is that precisely because, not in spite, of the fact that he is a Christian, a priest, and a bishop who insists that politics is not all there is. Thus there are not two John Pauls: in conventional media terms, the "social progressive" and the "doctrinal conservative." There is only one John Paul II, as there is only one Karol Wojtyla.

Jonathan Kwitny's *Man of the Century* is less woodenheaded in its wrestling with the complex simplicity of the life of Karol Wojtyla than were Tad Szulc and the authorial dyad of Carl Bernstein/Marco Politi. But Kwitny, who deserves full marks for demolishing the Bernstein/Politi "holy alliance" fiction and who avoids the worst of Szulc's gaucheries about the angry old man fighting vainly against the world he helped create, also tries to force Wojtyla's life and accomplishment onto the Procrustean bed of his own political preferences: in this instance, the Pope becomes the last great twentieth-century exponent of democratic socialism and pacifism.* The public accomplishment, Kwitny rightly claims, is a large one: Wojtyla was crucial in the destruction of the totalitarian option that caused such immense human suffering throughout the century. But is John Paul II the "man of the century" because of a political achievement?

The crisis of the twentieth century, which gave birth to totalitarianism in its sundry forms, has been

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in the first instance a crisis of culture: a crisis in the order of ideas and morals. This has been Karol Wojtyla's conviction since he helped lead a clandestine cultural resistance to the Nazi occupation of Poland during World War II. The will to power, the hallmark of the politics of this century, was a direct consequence of the collapse of a publicly available concept of human freedom that was tethered to truth and ordered to an objectively knowable human good. A modernity that could not give a persuasive account of the truth of its highest aspiration—freedom—was a modernity in which freedom necessarily came to be understood as a neutral faculty of choice. And, absent any agreed and publicly accessible standards by which the goodness of various choices could be judged and adjudicated, the reduction of social life to a raw contest for power necessarily ensued. Nietzsche, in other words, was right; and seeing what was coming, he went mad.

If there is a plausibility to John Paul II as the "man of the century," it is not because he put paid to one of the political epiphenomena of the crisis of late modernity; it is because he has advanced a proposal that cuts to the heart of the modern crisis of truth and freedom. That proposal, which has emerged from the heart of the Church, has been primarily directed toward the realm of culture because it is, first and always, an evangelical proposal: a proposal to consider the possibilities of human freedom in the light of God's freedom, which led to the Cross. To account for the life of Karol Wojtyla, his stewardship of the office of Peter in the Church, and his impact on the history of our time means taking seriously the Pope's conviction that reality is cruciform, and that the story of the world is, in the final analysis, the story of the Paschal Mystery. FT

* Kwitny traces the intellectual origins of this political stance to what he presents as a hitherto-undiscovered book by Karol Wojtyla, *Social Ethics*, published underground in 1953. The problem is that the "book" isn't a book, and Wojtyla wasn't the principal author. *Social Ethics*, as scholars have known for some time, is the text of Wojtyla's lectures for a social ethics course in the Krakow seminary. When Wojtyla was assigned to teach this course, he adapted the lecture notes of his predecessor, Father Jan Piwowarczyk. The notes are in fact a rather conventional exposition of Catholic social doctrine (with which Kwitny seems to be unfamiliar) in the period after Pius XI's 1931 encyclical *Quadragesimo Anno*. One of the Pope's closest associates has confirmed that Father Wojtyla, for whom social ethics had not been a major intellectual interest prior to his assignment to teach the course, used the Piwowarczyk lecture notes with "some elaborations." But "the material was not his own."

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When Everything Is Permitted

Wolfhart Pannenberg

It is a striking oddity of our modern circumstance that the subject of morality and ethics is assumed to be a matter of public significance, while the subject of God is thought to be an esoteric matter of interest to theologians and "people who go in for that sort of thing." It was not always so, and it is very much worth asking how we arrived at this present circumstance, and what might be done about it.

Today's public talk about moral values is usually framed in terms of a search for a moral consensus that is no longer self-evident—indeed that to many people is not evident at all. The search for a moral consensus based on a common human nature has, for some time now, replaced the social function of religious belief, which was long thought to be the indispensable foundation of social peace. For most of history, unity of religion was deemed essential to the unity of society and culture. That assumption was shattered in the religious wars in Europe of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. As a consequence of the wars of religion, precisely the opposite conclusion was drawn: Social peace requires that religious beliefs, and disagreements over religious beliefs, be determinedly disregarded. Although established religion continued for some time in most of Europe, religion no longer served its earlier function. In the place of religion, concepts of human nature became fundamental in theories of society and public culture.

Among German thinkers, it was Wilhelm Dilthey who, toward the end of the nineteenth century, underscored the ways in which, beginning in the middle of the seventeenth century, human nature had replaced religion in European thought. Building on the reformulation of natural law by Hugo Grotius and on Thomas Hobbes' social contract theories, conceptions of natural morality and natural religion became fashionable and were increasingly pitted against revealed religion and morality. Nonetheless, for some time concepts of morality continued to employ a belief in God as the origin of moral norms and final judge of human behavior. The necessary connection between God and morality was preserved, for instance, in the thought of Herbert of Cherbury and John Locke. With Anthony Shaftesbury, however, the moral sense was treated as autonomous. Even in his case, however, while the moral sense was independent from religion, his ideal of harmony finally required harmony with God and the order of the universe.

The eighteenth century witnessed different approaches to whether there is human autonomy in morals or whether the moral sense depends on belief in God. David Hume argued the autonomous character of moral feeling, while Rousseau took the other course. While Rousseau thought conscience is the source of our knowledge about the duties of natural law, he also thought the conscience of man is in a bad way. In Rousseau's *Emile,* the Vicar of Savoy argues that the voice of conscience has almost been extinguished in most of us because of the overwhelming experience of human perversion and injustice. A purification of conscience is required, and that is possible only if we believe in God. If God does not exist, the vicar contends, then only the wicked are acting reasonably. It makes no sense to be good. In that event, the success of the wicked in this life would undermine the moral sense also of the good. This can be prevented only by the belief that there is a final recompense beyond this life in which everyone receives his due. Religion is therefore of public importance in Rousseau's *Social Contract,* although it is not revealed religion. Rather, he proposed a "civil religion" with only enough articles of faith to motivate moral behavior—belief in God as the origin of social order and law, in divine providence, and in a future recompense.

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Although it is sometimes downplayed, Immanuel Kant was an admirer of Rousseau, and in his *Critique of Pure Reason* he adhered to the idea that moral conduct presupposed religion. Kant affirmed the autonomy of reason as the only source of our consciousness of moral law, but in his view the motivation of moral conduct presupposes a moral order in which each person will ultimately receive the measure of happiness or unhappiness appropriate to his merit. For this to be the case, there must be a harmony between the moral order and the course of nature, and that can be guaranteed only by a creator who, in his capacity as highest reason, is also the source of moral obligation. Without the existence of God, reason would be compelled to conclude that its intuition of moral law is a mere fiction.

This view of things posed the problem for Kant that it makes our moral sense dependent upon the existence of God, which contradicts the claim for the moral autonomy of reason. In his later years, therefore, Kant felt forced to attenuate the importance of religious belief in the sense of moral obligation. He now argued that religion is a consequence of moral consciousness, not a presupposition of moral obligation. In this case, belief in God and immortality only play the role of reconciling the demands of the moral law with our natural desire for happiness. This, however, looks an awful lot like eudaemonism—the theory that the highest moral goal is happiness—which was otherwise abhorrent to Kant. It is little wonder that Kant's philosophy of religion was soon considered the weakest part of his thought, while his principle of the autonomy of reason in moral philosophy was hailed as an epochal breakthrough.

II

In our situation today, there is little chance that the appeal to autonomous reason will bring about a broad consensus on moral norms. Even Kant would not expect that to happen, since he assigned to religion the task of introducing the moral principles of social conduct. He insisted only that the moral law should be the hermeneutical principle in transmitting religious belief, with the result that moral philosophy would take the lead in forming the moral consensus of society. Whether as Kantianism or as some form of utilitarianism, moral philosophy in the nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries did in fact replace religion among the intellectual elite and those whom they influenced. Both the Kantian and utilitarian forms of moral philosophy continued to affirm the public authority of moral norms, as well as their rational power to convince.

The authority of moral philosophy was dealt a severe blow, however, by Nietzsche's psychological analysis of the genealogy of moral values. What we call moral values, Nietzsche contended, are in fact in the service of deeper inclinations, propensities, and desires, especially the will to dominate others. The history of culture is the history of a struggle between different sets of moral norms. As a result, moral norms are relative, and the voice of conscience is in fact the voice of cultural context. This way of thinking was popularized and powerfully reinforced by Sigmund Freud and psychoanalysis, where we encounter the doctrine of the superego as the source of moral consciousness.

The relativizing of the formerly absolute authority of moral norms converges today with the emphasis upon individual freedom as the final authority in the conduct of life. In John Locke's philosophy, freedom is rooted in the concept of law. Today, freedom and law are pitted against each other. Moral and civil law are viewed as limits on the freedom of the individual. This is evident, for instance, in the constitution of my own country, Germany. There the freedom for self-realization is said to be limited by three factors: the justified claims of others, the moral law, and the order of positive law. Note what has happened, however, and I need not add that it has not happened only in Germany. Of the three limiting factors, the concept of moral law is no longer usable because there is no agreement about its content or obliging authority. It follows that "the justified claims of others" cannot be unequivocally asserted either, since we do not know what is and what is not justified. The end result is that the only limits on the exercise of individual freedom are the requirements of positive law. Morality and law are conflated, indeed equated, so that what is not illegal is not immoral. If it is not proscribed by law, others are expected to tolerate what the individual considers necessary to the exercise of his freedom. An unsurprising consequence of this is that positive law is often viewed as an arbitrary limitation of personal freedom.

Moral philosophy does not offer much help in this situation—not since 1903 when George Herbert Moore in *Principia Ethica* reduced moral judgment to intuitions that can be neither demonstrated nor refuted by rational argument. If that is the case, it is reasonable to view moral norms as emotion-driven preferences rather than the proper subject of rational argument. This is the intellectual and cultural circumstance brilliantly depicted in Alasdair MacIntyre's book of 1981, *After Virtue*, in which he shows how intuitivism and emotivism have caught up with Nietzsche's deconstruction of moral norms.

All that being said, however, we need not despair of the future of moral consciousness and moral argument. They are not going to disappear. There are several reasons why this is the case, not the least being the invincible propensity of human beings to judge the conduct of others. We are not going to stop judging, in private and in public. This is not due simply to our inclination to be "judgmental." Moral judgment is inextricably entangled with our very

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nature as social beings. We have no choice but to judge how people should behave in different situations. Situations demand it, whether we want to judge or not. It does not matter, at least at this level, whether the normative ideas presupposed in our judgment of the conduct of others are correct or fair. It is enough that such normative ideas are employed, and there is no getting around them.

Reflection on how we judge can lead to basic concepts of natural law. Our judgment, for instance, evidences a demand for some form of mutuality in social relations: *pacta sunt servanda*—both sides should keep their promises. This is the "golden rule" of mutuality: What you don't want others to do to you you shouldn't do to them. Of course, the rule calls for further specification with respect to how people are differently situated, but in one way or another the principle of mutuality underlies our judgments of others. Human beings have a common interest in the basic requirements of social life, and mutuality is the basis of the basics.

This is not to suggest that people always act according to the golden rule of mutuality. Far from it. It is obviously easier to judge the conduct of others than to judge our own conduct. With respect to our own situation, we are marvelously adept at claiming exemptions from general rules. This is not only because we tend to be self-serving creatures. It is also because individual situations are indeed unique and do not always fit the general rules, and each of us can more easily perceive the uniqueness of our own situation than the uniqueness of the situation of another person. This is not a fault. It is natural. We should not be surprised that a person can have a strong sense of the general rules while, at the same time, being inclined to claim an exemption for himself. The temptation, of course, is to overstate the importance of individual particularity. Our knowledge of the norms observed by the majority can function as a condition for successfully claiming an exemption for ourselves. After all, none of us is the majority.

Precisely at this point the dissolution of the absolute authority of moral norms percolates into the conduct of individual lives. The crisis of moral consciousness is not that people no longer know about the general conditions and requirements of life together in society. The crisis comes in applying such knowledge to individual cases, and especially to our own. This includes the question of how the formulation and observance of general norms can be made subservient to individual preference. As a result of the inability to agree on the connection between general rules and individual cases, there is no consensus on the idea of justice. Justice requires that each person or group receives and contributes according to their placement within a social system. There is a cacophony of claims to justice, typically articulated in terms of "rights." But there is at present no consensus about the requirements of justice. In the absence of such a consensus, cries for justice appear as empty and self-serving moralism.

III

Conflicting claims about justice are not uniquely modern. There have always been such conflicts within societies and between societies, with the result of social disruption and wars among nations. In the biblical vision, the condition of lasting peace is a settlement of conflicting claims, a settlement that can come only from a higher authority recognized by all the parties in conflict. In Isaiah and Micah we have the vision of a pilgrimage of all the nations to Mount Zion, where the God of Israel settles their conflicting claims and establishes eternal peace. Of course the vision has to do with the last days. At present, the nations of the world do not seem inclined to have their claims adjudicated by the God of Israel. Some might appeal to the President of the United States, and a few might appeal to the Pope, but even those nations that share a Christian heritage do not acknowledge the authority of the God of Israel to settle their differences. Nor can the secularized societies of the West be expected to resolve their internal conflicts by recourse to the authority of God.

It may well be the case that the moral crisis of modern secular societies is attributable to the fact that God is no longer publicly recognized as the source of moral norms. As long as such a recognition was intact, the absolute validity of moral norms and the individual sense of obligation to those norms were secure. Historical experience demonstrates that, for societies and for individuals, the autonomy of reason cannot successfully replace the authority of God. In this respect, Rousseau is fully vindicated. As is Dostoyevsky, whose Ivan Karamazov observed that, without God, "everything is permitted." In a 1970 interview, the Marxist philosopher Max Horkheimer declared that, at least in the West, everything related to morals is ultimately traceable to theology. We may want to qualify that by noting that the tradition of moral philosophy goes back to classical Greece and therefore does not have all its roots in the Judeo-Christian faith in the God of Israel. And qualify it further by noting that a disposition to benevolence, a benevolence that takes pleasure in the happiness of others, is part of human nature. Nonetheless, the sense of moral obligation as it was cultivated for the last fifteen hundred years is hardly conceivable apart from faith in the God of the Bible.

The fact remains that in our Western and secularized societies the public authority of religion, meaning mainly Christianity, will not easily be restored. The more promising prospect is for a renewal of a specifically Christian morality within the Christian community itself. Here attention must be paid to a Christian way of living that is clearly distinguished from the conventional ways of the surrounding cul-

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ture. There are important objections to what seems to be a turn inward that focuses moral reasoning on the development of a distinctive ethic for the Christian community. The most important objection is that morality, by its very nature, is related to what is universally human. There is something inherently wrong with a sectarian ethic. Moral discourse in Christian theology, as in philosophy, attends to human nature, the needs and aspirations of all. It does not attend only, or even in the first place, to the special concerns of Christians. In the history of Christian ethics, Christian ethics is not only for Christians.

This universal concern is overwhelmingly evident from the time of the early Church Fathers. Christian ethics addresses all human beings as creatures of the one God; all are involved in the fall of Adam, and all are called to reconciliation with God, liberation from the bondage of sin and death, and final glorification in communion with God, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. This understanding of the nature and history of mankind explains the missionary imperative of Christianity. It is grounded in the belief that all humanity and the entire universe is created by the God of Israel who revealed himself definitively in Jesus Christ. True, this understanding is no longer shared by everybody in our societies, and it therefore does not characterize the spirit of our public culture. It is viewed as an understanding peculiar to Christians. But it is nonetheless a Christian understanding that embraces all human beings.

Christian ethics, then, is not limited to Christians but is related to the moral situation and calling of all. This is the connection between the particular and universal in Christian thought, and it is a connection that must be honored also today in Christian moral reasoning. There can be no turning inward to the Christian community that excludes Christian claims and Christian concerns about the universal condition and destiny of human beings as such. As the early Church integrated the classic catalogue of virtues into the Christian doctrine of virtue that culminates in the Pauline triad of faith, hope, and love, so Christian ethics today must comprehend all that is true in moral reasoning beyond the formal boundaries of Christianity itself. We dare not forget that John 3:16 begins with, "God so loved the world . . ." Christian ethics that is worthy of the name understands itself to be a moral account of and for the world.

We have now addressed the first objection to a Christian ethics that addresses itself specifically to the conduct of the Christian community. A second objection arises from the peculiar history of Protestantism. While Roman Catholic moral teaching has traditionally been articulated in tension with modernity, Protestantism has understood itself to be working in tandem with the development of the modern world. This is notably true of liberal Protestantism, what is often called the "cultural Protestantism" once dominant in much of Europe and North America. This Protestantism is reluctant to differ from the prevailing values of the general culture. Indeed, it feels it has a proprietorial interest in those values. This attitude can be traced to the Reformation, and especially to Luther's doctrine that the Christian is fulfilling his divine vocation by doing the work he is called to in the secular sphere. This was in sharpest contrast to the Roman Catholic view that there are, for instance in monasticism, special vocations to holiness. Moreover, and very important to our discussion of moral authority, Protestantism took credit for the development of modern ideas of liberty and human rights. As a result, Protestants viewed adaptation to modern culture not as a course of moral compromise but as a course of fidelity to their heritage.

Examples could be multiplied to illustrate the ways in which Protestantism identified with the general culture, even when it also attempted to transform it. That identification appears to be jeopardized when Christian ethics turns its attention to the community of faith rather than the general culture. Such a turn to the community is suspected of sectarianism, especially when the accent is on Christian separation from the ways of the world, or when the commandment to love one's neighbor is understood chiefly as a responsibility to Christian brothers and sisters. Yet we must entertain the possibility that a seemingly sectarian turn to the community, and away from a general culture that is alienated from its Christian heritage, may contribute very significantly to the moral renewal of that culture. In the early Church, Christians lived a very different morality from that of the surrounding culture, and their courage to be different became one of the powerful attractions of Christianity. People recognized that the Christian ethic was superior and worthy of emulation. We should not discount the possibility of that happening again.

A third objection to the proposal that Christian ethics should turn to the community of faith arises from the Christian idea of love. Does not the call to unconditional love require us to accept people just as they are? That unconditionality seems to be compromised if we discriminate between Christians and non-Christians or make demands of people. In the name of love, the apostolic admonitions not to have fellowship with people who live in violation of apostolic teaching are easily disregarded. But Christian love has a critical edge. It cannot be equated with unconditional "acceptance." Love is ready to accept everyone, but also calls everyone to change. To the adulteress of John 8, Jesus said, "Go, and sin no more." When, in telling the story of his acceptance of the woman, we omit that admonition, we break the connection between the commandment to love our neighbor and the prior commandment to love God.

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One cannot love God without obeying his will, and in the teaching of Jesus the love of God is both the source and criterion of our obligation to love others. People are to be loved in light of the destiny intended for them by their Creator.

In the Old Testament, the love of God is expressed in his electing a people for himself and in his persevering in that act of election. This is the source and criterion of all moral obligation. Because God wants his elect people to flourish, every member of that community is required to observe the minimal conditions of the community's flourishing. This explains the correspondence between the second table of the Decalogue and the truths of natural law that are essential to communal life. No human community is possible where people murder one another, steal one another's possessions, violate their marriages, dishonor their parents, or injure one another by slander.

The moral teaching of Jesus was also derived directly from the authority of God and his love, not from the authority of the tradition's legal and moral teaching. In Matthew 6, for instance, the love of the Creator for his creatures is evident in that "he makes his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust." Thus are we to follow God's example, loving not only our friends but also our enemies. Again and again, Jesus taught that, as the love of the heavenly Father is expressed in his forgiveness of us, so also are we obliged to forgive others. Thus he taught us to pray, "Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us." God's forgiveness is prior, as the source and criterion of our forgiving.

This understanding of love is the Christian contribution to ethical discourse and universal morality. Christian love enriches and strengthens the natural inclination of human beings to benevolence, which is always in desperate need of being strengthened. This is the most important Christian contribution to moral life in general, also under the conditions of modern secular societies. But Christians also need to point out that benevolence and the joy that comes with it are evidence of a deeper longing of human nature for the good. The good for which the human being longs is not limited to the moral good. It is the good understood in the Platonic sense, meaning the good that is the source of happiness. It is, in short, a longing for God, the source of ultimate and lasting happiness. In benevolence, there is a glimpse of that ultimate good, accompanied by the experience of happiness. It is a hint of the kingdom to come.

Our sighting of that kingdom, however, does not lead to indifference to the quotidian conditions of human community. On the contrary, where mutual benevolence holds sway, those conditions are met without further ado. In the words of Paul, "Therefore, if any one is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has passed away, behold, the new has come." If Christian ethics attends to the living out of this new way—a new way that is the fulfillment of our nature from the beginning—the world may again take note. Then, at last, we may overcome the striking oddity of our modern circumstance that the subject of morality and ethics is assumed to be a matter of public significance, while the subject of God is thought to be an esoteric matter of interest to theologians and "people who go in for that sort of thing." Then, at last, our culture may be renewed by understanding that we do not need to choose between nature and religion, and that freedom, far from being limited when ordered to moral authority, is not possible without it. FT

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The School of Sanctification

John J. Haldane

Higher education should not neglect the personal formation of students. In the past, particularly in small institutions, there was a concern for the moral well-being of what were perceived to be young people in transition to full adulthood. Tutors thought of themselves as charged with the responsibility of helping students, as it might have been said in the last century, "cultivate virtue." This way of thinking would almost certainly be derided nowadays as paternalistic, patronizing, and an infringement of student autonomy.

Indeed it might even be considered positive abuse of students. Not so long ago I attended a conference on Catholic schools in which much of the discussion took the form of grumblings about Catholic childhood and Catholic education. Indeed an auction developed reminiscent of the Monty Python skit about the "Self-Made Yorkshiremen," each speaker outbidding the last in the privation and cruelty of his upbringing. I found it difficult to believe that the reports were accurate and not the familiar exaggerations of group therapy sessions. But they obviously served some socio-biographical need in the speakers, and that fact forces us to two considerations. The first is how their religiously founded educations failed the speakers, leaving them with such a deep unfulfilled need. And the second is the more general and more important question of what a religiously founded education ought to do for its students. I write as a Roman Catholic, but the question—and its answer—is one that must concern all Christians wondering how to rear and educate their children.

Briefly stated, the main point of a Christian education should be to lay down the foundations of a good life and a good death. The pagan Romans could say "death is the gateway to life," yet these days many Christians seem more disposed to say "life is the gateway to personal self-fulfilment." The four last things—death, judgment, heaven, and hell—are in danger of being seen as unhelpful and perhaps removable intrusions from the Dark Ages. But life in the natural order is conditioned by death, and human activity should be measured against this end. It is not morbid to think often of mortality when the point of doing so is to reflect back on one's present condition and actions. One might say that those best love life who know its meaning, and since for the Christian a key to its meaning is the inescapable fact of death, no one can love life who seeks to deny its finitude.

It is within this context that a Christian philosophy of education should be developed. Education is an activity or process. As such it is defined by its goal, what it aims to achieve. Chesterton had this in mind when he wrote that "Education is only truth in a state of transmission," and raised immediately the rhetorical question "How can we pass on truth if it has never come into our hand?" For Aristotle and Thomas Aquinas the theory of education belongs to the domain of practical reason, and both philosophers thought that such reason should work backward from the desired ultimate aim through the intermediary circumstances until one arrives at one's present situation. What this sort of exercise in reverse syllogistic usually reveals is that the steps necessary to realize any ultimate aim are many and complex. Once one appreciates this, and turns to consider the purpose of human life in communion with God and the role of the Apostles and their successors in bringing people to this goal, it begins to become clear why the Church is a complex and multifaceted institution. The destination may be simply described as Heaven; but the journey and the modes of transport reflect the complexity of the human condition—a condition of inherited fallenness and sin.

The point of these reflections is to suggest that the

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traditional patterns of Christian life and formation that those in their forties and older will recall had their rationale in a definite and well-developed moral theology. Recalling religious texts from the 1950s and before, it is easy to form impressions of dull and doctrinal Catholic scholasticism or of petty Protestant rigorism. If you actually take the trouble to look at this material, however, you will find much of it impressive and instructive. It is dangerous hubris to suppose that the fruits of two thousand years of doctrinal development, liturgical devotion, and spiritual reflection and discipline should lightly be considered outmoded impediments to religious well-being. Yet it is precisely this tradition that the conference participants were keen to distance themselves from.

Nowadays there is a marked tendency to distinguish and separate three broad approaches to religious belief: the spiritual, the historical, and the philosophical. Those who follow the first emphasize experience, emotion, and contemplative reflection; followers of the second concentrate on sacred Scripture and Church tradition; and those partial to the third favor abstract and general argument.

Part of what is implied in distinguishing these approaches is some tension or opposition among them. Currently, for example, there seems to be a preference for the spiritual approach, often under the description of personal renewal or integrative healing. Those who are drawn to it will often say that they are not tied to any particular church or scriptural revelation but have a more personal or experiential understanding of religion. Such people are inclined to regard philosophical theology as dry and overly rationalistic. This same complaint about philosophy is also voiced by the advocates of Scripture and ecclesial practice, but they take issue with the rootlessness and self-absorbed individualism of New Age spirituality. Finally, the philosophically disposed tend to be suspicious of uncritical reliance upon emotion and similarly regard Scripture and Church as going far beyond what reason warrants.

Doubtless these tendencies reflect different personalities, and it is true that each approach appeals to a genuine aspect of the religious life. The division of religion into these three approaches, however, is neither necessary nor desirable. Indeed, I believe that its effect is generally malign and we have a pressing need to reintegrate the spiritual, the historical, and the philosophical.

Praying for the dead, for example, is a characteristic Catholic practice around which rituals and liturgies have been developed. But this does not make philosophical questions about the possibility and nature of an afterlife irrelevant. On the contrary, the meaning of prayer for the dead is given in part by the metaphysical idea that natural death is not the end of personal existence. So if there are philosophical objections to the ideas of disembodiment, reincarnation, or resurrection then the point and value of the religious practice are threatened. As St. Paul noted in writing to the Corinthians, "If there is no resurrection of the dead then Christ has not been raised . . . and your faith is in vain."

Similarly, although the "god of the philosophers" is characterized in abstract terms—as a self-existent, eternal, immutable, omnipotent, omniscient, omnibenevolent, immaterial creator and sustainer of the universe—it is a serious mistake to sever the links between spiritual reflection, revelation, and philosophy. Each has a part to play in the task of coming to know, to love, and to serve God.

Consider the prologue to the Gospel of John: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God . . . all things were made through him. . . . And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth. . . . And from his fullness we have all received grace upon grace." In the space of a few lines John informs Greeks and Greek-speaking Jews that what the philosophers had long sought after—the Logos, or the ultimate account of things—has been with God from all eternity and is that through which all things were made; and that this Logos was incarnate in Jesus of Nazareth—the Way, the Truth, and the Life. Thus are philosophy, history, and spirituality united. To separate them would diminish each, for what John teaches is at once metaphysical, revelatory, and a theme for meditation. A further example, this time from liturgy, supports the same conclusion. The Jesuit poet Gerard Manley Hopkins gives the following English rendering of a eucharistic hymn traditionally ascribed to Aquinas:

> Godhead here in hiding whom I do adore,
> Masked by these bare shadows, shape and nothing more;
> See, Lord, at thy service low lies here a heart,
> Lost all lost in wonder at the God thou art.
>
> Seeing, touching, tasting are in thee deceived;
> How says trusty hearing? That shall be believed;
> What God's Son has told me, take for truth I do;
> Truth himself speaks truly, or there's nothing true.

What is believed of the consecrated host rests upon the words of Scripture. The text itself is a testimony of personal and ecclesial belief—but couched in poetic terms and adverting to the philosophical and theological doctrine of the real presence.

Some religious believers take pride and comfort in the idea that their faith owes nothing to reason, historical testimony, or doctrinal authority. Perhaps they believe that by treating their belief as a personal relationship with God they incur fewer troublesome burdens. Such an attitude, however, is quite alien to

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the central traditions of Western and Eastern Christianity (as it is to those of Judaism and Islam). The three monotheistic faiths are all religions "of the book," but neither value nor sense can be attached to discerning and trusting the word of Scripture unless it is possible to specify which writings and interpretations are to be accepted and which rejected. Every faith of "the book" presupposes a canon of authentic and authoritative Scripture, and one need only ask the question of how such a canon came to be determined, ratified, and transmitted to realize the ineliminable role of reason and general understanding.

G. K. Chesterton said of philosophy that it is "merely thought that has been thought out" and added that "man has no alternative, except between influence by thought that has been thought out and being influenced by thought that has not been thought out." Holy Scripture—and the Creeds and biblical spirituality it inspired—is religious experience that has been thought out. Nothing less would be worth transmitting across the centuries, and the religiously disposed should not settle for anything else. The spiritual, the historical, and the philosophical are no more separable in reality than are the three sides of a triangle—or the three persons of the Trinity.

One consequence of all this is that Christian education needs to attend to the integration of these three aspects of faith, and my sense is that we are failing in our educational task with regard to them. It used to be the case that Catholics knew that the Church placed great emphasis on reason, and that theology was closely identified with philosophy. They were aware of the great figures of the Middle Ages such as Aquinas and Bonaventure; and they knew in very broad terms the two main styles of argument for the existence of God: from the contingency of the world and from the order within it.

Of course their knowledge in these matters was from testimony and they deferred to the expertise of others. But that is no disqualification. Just as my scientific knowledge rests on the say of others whom I take to be expert, so my knowledge of dogma is based on the word of those who have it from those who know. Certainly this assumes that someone somewhere does know or that the knowledge is set down and may be recovered. I would recommend the following counsel of prudence to all Catholics: you should cultivate the habit of thinking that if the Church teaches it as a matter of faith and morals then somewhere there is a good case for it drawn from revelation, tradition, or natural reason. This may seem obvious, but there are many who would regard what I have said as intellectually naive and as encouraging an attitude of docility.

Similar points of contrast may be drawn in relation to historic practice. It once was the case that Catholic children were taught a reverence for the sacraments and the liturgy. This effect was produced by pious devotions, modes of dress and behavior, stories of heroic devotion, and so on. One benefit of these efforts was to prepare children for the idea that amidst the ordinariness of life there are channels of transcendence. It is much easier for a child to believe that God is present on the altar if the setting is physically special, if the demeanor of older children and adults is reverential, and if the priest later takes evident care to clean the vessels and consume the residue of the body and blood of Christ.

Talk of the Mass as merely a family meal encourages quite different ways of thinking. It is unsurprising when later in life those raised in such a "get-together-with-Jesus" style wonder why the Church should make so much fuss about restricting the Eucharist to Christians in communion with Catholicism. Again, they are liable to regard caution against participation in the religious services of other denominations as mean and prejudiced. It is as if having been taken regularly to McDonald's one were to be told that one's friends who eat at Burger King are not free to share one's meal, and moreover that one should not eat there oneself. Yet the well-educated Catholic knows that the Mass is not a religious service, a family meal, or a community feast. It is an event in which heaven and earth come together, as mundane time and sacred time are united. In it the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, a Divine Person, is made really present—not reenacted or remembered, but made actually present as a means of sacrifice by which our sins and those of mankind generally are atoned. The Messiah whose voluntary death opened the gates of Heaven is presented to us as the priest speaks the words of consecration. Children cannot be taught this sacred doctrine all at once, but they should be taught it instead of the deflationary and desacralizing account of the Mass as a devotional service akin to that of other religious occasions.

I can imagine it being said that my recommendations would make Catholicism seem esoteric, supernaturalist, and exclusive, whereas we should be celebrating the complexity and beauty of the natural order and opening children's eyes to the universally shared features of all religions. Certainly creation is wonderful, but in order to appreciate the extent of its glory one has to understand how limited are scientific and naturalistic accounts of it. The most compelling evidence for God's existence comes precisely as one realizes that the natural order is not self-explanatory and that preternatural causes are effective in it. The "supernatural," as Catholics should know, is not merely a scientific or metaphysical category: it is primarily a *theological* one pertaining to the order of Divine Grace. This, not spooky magic, is what is made available through the sacraments. Furthermore it is exclusive in as much as it—unlike french fries in fast food restaurants—is freely and electively bestowed by God and is not an entitlement to all who feel benignly disposed towards the universe or

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to the ground of its being. If these matters have been confused or lost sight of it may be because too much attention has been given to comparative religious education and too little to Catholic religious knowledge.

Earlier I pointed out that activities are identified by reference to the goals toward which they aim—not any goal, but their proper objects. The goal, in this sense, of spiritual development is union with God. Such union is in part a mystery, but to the extent that it can be understood it is well described by the great teachers and mystics of the Church. Modern ideas of spirituality typically characterize the spiritual goal in terms of becoming a certain kind of person (a fully integrated one, perhaps), or of deepening one's understanding of reality. But unless these are just elliptical ways of talking about union with the Divine Persons, they are at best misleading. Certainly, as the journey proceeds the travelers are changed and their understanding becomes more profound, but these are effects and not causes or constituent features of increasing proximity to God.

In the past when there was still a lively sense of the strangeness and dangers of unknown terrain, travelers sought out experienced and prudent guides, and where these were not available in person they studied any maps and topographical writings they may have left behind. It is unsurprising that the Church Fathers and those who succeeded them, thinking of human life as a journey towards God, often used the metaphor of the guide to describe one competent and willing to lead others along the way. In earlier days the names of the great Catholic spiritual writers and the titles of their works would have been fairly well-known, even if most people had not read them: Augustine's *On True Religion* and the *Confessions*, Benedict's *Rule*, Gregory the Great's *Dialogues*, Catherine of Sienna's *Dialogues*, Catherine of Genoa's *Purgation and Purgatory*, Thomas à Kempis' *Imitation of Christ*, Ignatius Loyola's *Spiritual Exercises*, Teresa of Avila's *Interior Castle*, John of the Cross' *The Dark Night*, Francis de Sales' *Introduction to the Devout Life*, and Jean Pierre de Caussade's *Self-Abandonment to Divine Providence*. (I wanted to add "and one could go on." But there are reasons to hesitate, one being the familiar feature of any list of "greats" that it is a product of the judgment of time, and the nearer the past the less determinate the judgment. So let me leave the list as it stands.)

The last named of these classic writers on spirituality, Jean Pierre de Caussade, has a phrase that I have always admired: "the sacrament of the present moment." Caussade was born in 1675 near Toulouse. At the age of eighteen he entered the Jesuit novitiate there and eleven years later was ordained a priest of the Society. In 1720 he was transferred to the preaching missions, and in 1728 he was sent to Nancy where he began work as spiritual director to a convent of Visitation sisters. He left Nancy twice, in 1731 and again in 1739, and after tours of duty in various Jesuit houses he returned to Toulouse as spiritual director, dying there in 1751. Exactly a decade before his death he published his *Dialogues on the Various States of Prayer*, but the works that contain his greatest teachings are his posthumously published letters to the Visitation sisters and, particularly, the treatise known as *Self-Abandonment to Divine Providence*, which reads:

> God still speaks to us today as he spoke to our fathers, when there were no spiritual directors or set methods. Then, spirituality consisted in fidelity to the designs of God. . . . Then it was enough for those who led a spiritual life to see that each moment brought with it a duty to be faithfully fulfilled. . . .
>
> If the work of our sanctification presents us with difficulties it is because we do not look at it in the right way. In reality holiness consists in one thing alone, namely, fidelity to God's plan. And this fidelity is equally within everyone's capacity in both its active and passive practice.
>
> The active practice consists in accomplishing the duties imposed upon us by the general laws of God and the Church, and by the particular state of life which we have embraced. Passive fidelity consists in the loving acceptance of all that God sends us at every moment. Which of these two requirements of holiness is beyond our strength? . . . Not active fidelity, since the duties imposed by it cease to be such when they are really beyond our powers. . . . What excuse can we plead? Yet this is all that God demands of the soul in the work of its sanctification. He demands it from the high and the low, from the strong and the weak; in a word, from all, always and everywhere. . . .
>
> The passive part of holiness is even more easy, for it consists merely in accepting what most frequently cannot be avoided, and in suffering with love, that is to say with resignation and sweetness, what is too often endured with weariness and discontent. . . .
>
> Perfection does not consist in understanding God's designs but in submitting to them. . . . They are God working in the soul to make it like himself. . . . The whole essence of the spiritual life consists in recognizing the designs of God for us at the present moment. . . .
>
> Souls who walk in the light sing the hymns of light, those who walk in darkness, the hymns of darkness. They must both be left to sing to the end the part and the motet which God allots to each.
>
> The more we seem to lose with God, the more we gain; the more he deprives us of the natural, the more he gives of the supernatural.

The meaning of the expression "the sacrament of

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the present moment" will be clear. For de Caussade the search for God begins, and in a sense ends, exactly where one is at any given moment. No occult incantations, no esoteric diagrams, no strange exercises, no theatrical props, just a call to sanctity through willing service and acceptance.

I am struck by the contrast between this and many contemporary calls to spirituality. Let me quote an advertisement from a well-established religious order that appeared in a recent issue of a prominent Catholic periodical. The advertisement featured a circular logo showing three joined figures stretching upwards towards a smaller circle in which a winding road or river heads towards the sun-rayed horizon. The accompanying text reads:

Sabbatical Challenge For Women Religious

"Out beyond ideas of wrongdoing and rightdoing there's a field.
I'll meet you there."—Rumi
Experiential program; process oriented.
Call to inner growth; self-empowerment, inner wisdom.
Supportive, loving community; safe environment to grow wholistically.
Surrounded and supported by a variety of resources.
Powerful, deep healing; loving integration leading to inner freedom.

The Rumi quoted in the advertisement was a thirteenth-century Sufi poet whose disciples formed the fraternity of Mawlawiyah, better known as "Whirling Dervishes." I must confess to not having read the writings of Rumi, but I suspect that those women religious who respond to the challenge will receive rather different guidance from that offered by Father de Caussade to the Visitation sisters.

Recall Chesterton's remark about education being truth in a state of transmission. Then ask what truths we know about the spiritual state and about how to advance it. Young people at school and college live in times where spirituality is often equated with pantheistic psychobabble. This generally involves vague injunctions to be at one with oneself and develop holistically in accord with the unity of nature. Like the command "do something," these offer little direction and it is hard to think what they could exclude. Caussade, by contrast, tells us exactly what to do: first, obey God's will as communicated through Holy Scripture and Holy Church; and second, within the structure this creates, accept what comes each moment as part of gracious providence.

The theology of acceptance is at odds with a culture that has extended the idea of consumer rights to the conditions of life itself. A few years ago commentators and politicians wrote of a "dependency culture" in which people expected resources to come to them from the state. Now we are taught to be self-confident claimants to various moral entitlements. We have rights to be upheld: rights of ownership, of association, of free expression, of respect; in general, rights to fulfilment on terms chosen by ourselves. Ironically, since it wears the mantle of virtue, this ideology of entitlement undermines the notion of an objective moral order, for it treats subjective preferences as the determinants of value. Crudely, what is good (for me) is what I want. Any appeal by others to independent standards of right and wrong then appears as a threat to frustrate my efforts at self-fulfilment. It is, in other words, a violation of my rights.

This twisted logic of entitlement can be seen operating daily in discussions of abortion, adoption, care of the elderly, euthanasia, genetic therapy, human reproduction, sexual orientation and practice, and so on through the familiar list. My impression is that young Catholics are often no better equipped to deal with such issues than are others of their age and general level of education. Given the riches of Church teaching and magisterial moral theology this is an indictment of educational practice. But I am not blaming the schools as such, for the explanation lies at an earlier stage in the failure to substitute sufficient lay expertise at the level of higher education in place of seminary clerics. In consequence the current state of religious knowledge among teachers is often frighteningly limited.

There is little point, though, in continuing to condemn the failures of the past. The question is how to make our way forward to something better. One might try to begin with doctrine, or by retelling the story of Christianity. Both are important, but before people will attend to these they must first be brought to the point of recognizing that doctrine and Church form part of a single Divine answer to a deep human need—the need to be united in love with an unfailing companion. This is the role of spirituality in education.

Identifying the destination and the starting point and tracing the route between them, de Caussade makes the point that we need to travel for no longer than the present moment and no farther than the spot on which we already stand. Slow the pace of discussion to this, lower the volume of talk, and teach children to discern what the moment calls for—sometimes action to change the world, sometimes patience to accept it. With these habits acquired, it will quite naturally occur to them to ask what we know about God and of his will for us. From that point on, education will construct itself in accord with the Aristotelian-Thomistic pattern of practical reasoning, working backwards from ends to means. I have faith that this will bring true happiness and contentment as well as other, less important, forms of success. Any education that could achieve this would be a great gift to future generations. FT

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Women of Renewal: A Statement

This statement, originally titled "A Christian Women's Declaration," was issued on September 16, 1997 by the Ecumenical Coalition of Women and Society, a project of the Washington-based Institute on Religion and Democracy. It is reproduced here with the permission of IRD © 1997.

WHO WE ARE

First and foremost, we are women of faith and principle whose Christianity is founded not on human invention but on divinely revealed truth. This truth enables us to experience the redemptive, transforming power of Jesus Christ, who made freedom and dignity possible for all human beings—for women as well as for men. Because we are created in God's image and the grace of God is extended equally to women, we can join the company of those women who first wept in the shadow of the cross and later rejoiced at the empty tomb. Because the Bible is the most effective force in history for lifting women to higher levels of respect, dignity, and freedom, we join an historic succession of women whose Christian faith is forged from biblical truth and whose lives are shaped into Christ's image on the anvil of obedience.

As women we are beneficiaries, not victims, of our Christian faith, despite its imperfect outworking in history. Women of the early Church gave witness to Christ in boldness of speech, purity of character, and even the final sacrifice of martyrdom. Women of the medieval period enriched the Church through their writing and teaching and their examples of prayer and contemplation, self-discipline, and service to family and society. Christian women of the modern era have been pioneers in areas such as education, health care, business, artistic expression, social reform, and worldwide evangelism.

And in every generation, godly wives and mothers have responsibly exercised God's mandate to fill the earth and subdue it and have freely offered their lives for the nurture and guidance of the next generation. We are indebted beyond measure to these women and we celebrate them all. We also honor those who have sought more opportunities and greater respect for women. It is by their efforts that we enjoy a more extended range of activities and opportunities than any previous generation.

Many of the earliest and most effective advocates of women's rights and dignity were women of faith whose convictions were rooted in biblical truth. They recognized that all Christians, male or female, share certain obligations and benefits—that "in Christ there is neither male nor female." Therefore, it is *in Christ* that we seek to exercise our freedoms today. As individuals, we seek to develop Christian character and to live faithfully within our families, churches, neighborhoods, and the world. As members of the Christian community, we endeavor collectively to bring the love of Christ and authentic Christian freedom and justice to all—especially the weak and helpless who, too often, are denied the respect due all who are created in God's image.

WE AFFIRM

Our Christian faith has been nurtured in various denominations, but we consider ourselves to be one in Christ as members of His universal Church. Specifically, we affirm the following:

We affirm the triune God. We acknowledge God's sovereignty, righteousness, and love. We recognize that God is transcendent and distinct from ourselves, yet we bear God's image as His children created in love. We consider it a privilege to emulate Christ by addressing God by the name Father, even as we acknowledge that God, who created sexuality, is nei-

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ther male nor female. We will worship no other god but the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. We know that we are not our own, but we have been bought by the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. We cannot create forgiveness, identity, purpose, and hope by ourselves. Instead, it is Christ who by His death and resurrection supplies what we cannot. There is no person or force that can bring us to God as Jesus Christ has done. In addition, we gratefully acknowledge the power and grace of the Holy Spirit in our lives.

We affirm the authority of the Scriptures and the doctrines represented in the ecumenical creeds of the Church. We believe that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the divinely inspired written Word of God for all people throughout all ages. From them we learn the history of God's saving acts toward Israel and all humankind, and so we have a reliable basis for understanding the divine plan and our place in it. From the Scriptures we receive God's commandments and counsel, so that we have authoritative guidance for individual behavior and social life. We are called to approach the Bible with faith in the Holy Spirit who inspired it and with a readiness to obey the Word that we hear.

We affirm the natural, created order. We know God to be far greater than what we see in the world around us or experience within ourselves. For this reason we do not worship the Earth or anything in it, including our own selves. We find evidence of the Creator's design in the differentiation of light and darkness, sea and land, plant and animal, male and female. God pronounced it good that the human race is constituted by two complementary sexes—both created together in His image. We accept this pattern of human sexuality as a foundation for human society, and we celebrate the healthy relationships of mutual service that embody it—above all, the divinely ordained covenant of marriage between one man and one woman prepared to bear and rear each succeeding generation of children. Further, we acknowledge that various social institutions—including family, church, and government—are ordained of God and should operate within appropriate spheres of authority with prerogatives that are respected by the other institutions.

We acknowledge human sinfulness. We acknowledge ourselves to be sinners—without the resources within ourselves to know or to serve God adequately. Sin is personal as well as structural. Every person is guilty. No more and no less than men, we as women are dependent upon the mercy of God in Christ. Ultimately, we trust neither ourselves nor any other human power to defeat the forces of sin and death. Our salvation comes from the Lord.

We affirm that we can achieve the highest and best for ourselves only through obedience to God and service to others. We believe that obedience to God is the pathway, not an obstacle, to our fulfillment as women. We affirm the joy that comes from practicing the timeless virtues that form the character of Christ within us—discipline, self-sacrifice, courage, humility, patience, charity, truthfulness, and personal integrity. The Holy Spirit is the source of the strength to control selfish impulses, thereby making us capable of living authentic Christian lives.

We affirm the liberty that comes from the reconciling truth that we have already received in Christ. We are grieved by the disrespect, the abuse, the personal prejudice and institutional oppression by which humans so often dishonor the image of God in their fellow humans. This tragedy strikes us particularly because we are conscious of how often women have been the targets of such disrespect, abuse, prejudice, and oppression. We pledge ourselves to stand in solidarity with all who have been denied justice, freedom, and opportunity. We know that, ultimately, the fullest freedom for women is to be found only in Jesus Christ. We believe that His Gospel—as an essential foundation for any other social or political movement or philosophy—has the power to change us and change the world, so that we all may be the good, strong, capable, dignified, and faithful women that we aspire to be.

THE CHALLENGES WE FACE

Well-organized movements have developed ideologies that undermine and ultimately destroy the positive contributions the Church and culture have made in affirming women's dignity and equality.

Detrimental Cultural Trends. Troubling and detrimental assumptions within the wider contemporary, secular society include:

- Epistemological (what is true) and moral (what is right) relativism that denies that any objective norm is available.

- Genetic, environmental, and cultural "determinisms" that assume behavior is beyond personal control and that repudiate the idea of personal responsibility.

- Oversimplified "group think" that views life as a struggle between oppressed victim groups and their oppressors.

- The elevation of individual rights over personal responsibility.

- The focus on the autonomous individual to the neglect of institutions of civil society, especially family.

- Excessive state power and other utopian attempts,

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whether of the left or right, to engineer perfect societies.

• The "therapeutic" view that sees the sole purpose of human life as pleasure and self-actualization.

• Materialism as the sole basis for human happiness and success, a materialism that is blind to the deeper joy that is possible in adversity or prosperity.

Problems With Radical Feminism. The radical feminists' agenda has revolutionary, not reformist, goals. This agenda demeans the role of women past and present and seeks to restructure society. Rather than liberating women by providing them equal opportunity to develop to the fullest their God-given talents, abilities, and potential, this agenda, in fact, leads to women being demeaned, their lives destroyed and their spirits enslaved. Specifically, we reject the following aspects of radical feminism:

• The interpretation of "gender" exclusively as a "social construct." We recognize the force of cultural influences and individual choice on concepts of maleness and femaleness, but we affirm that sexuality is rooted in the biological designation of the two sexes—male and female.

• The definition of "equality" as "identical," with quotas establishing 50-50 representation of males/females in all institutions and public arenas. We advocate equal opportunity rather than prescribed outcomes.

• The view that women have been "empty vessels" shaped by "patriarchy." We recognize that some societies and cultures have unjustly limited women's full participation, but biblical, church, and secular history record countless women of vision and tenacious faith who, through prayer and perseverance, overcame limitations of every variety to influence the shaping of human history.

• The portrayal of women as "victims," the exaggerations of women's suffering, and the denial that advances have been made in recognition of women's rights. While we deplore all abuse and oppression, we gratefully acknowledge advances for women. As a whole, Western women entering the twenty-first century have power, education, and privilege unprecedented in human history.

• The idea that women are innately superior to, inferior to, or radically different in ability from men. We celebrate both our commonalities with men as fellow human beings and our unique differences as men and women.

• The glorification of sexual lifestyles without limits or consequences and views of marriage and family that contradict biblically based faith and time-tested moral behavior. We affirm the wholeness and freedom that flow from sexual abstinence before marriage and lifelong, monogamous fidelity within the mutual covenant of marriage between one man and one woman.

The Undermining of Our Churches. At times, portions of the American religious community have offered inadequate, irresponsible, or even destructive responses to pressing cultural crises. Recent decades reveal a massive diminution of the role that church leaders have historically played in positively shaping society. All too often, some of our church leaders have simply appropriated the questionable cultural values and agenda of society as their own. Specifically, we are troubled by the following developments within our churches:

• The movement to "re-imagine" two thousand years of Christian faith. We repudiate the assumption that Christian faith and teachings were first "imagined" by men and now should be "re-imagined" by women.

• The rejection of a balanced view of Christian monotheism, which has traditionally worshiped a triune God (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) who is both immanent and transcendent. We repudiate the growing trend to embrace idolatrous tenets and rituals from non-Christian faiths and to intermix these with Christian faith and practice.

• The movement to reject any objective ultimate authority and elevate human experience as the only source of meaning.

• The exclusive focus on corporate and systemic sins, such as racism, classism, and sexism, while ignoring the commission of those sins by individuals who can and should be held accountable. The assumption of the innate innocence of the human person and human perfectibility leads to neglecting a call for personal repentance and Christian conversion.

• The substitution of orthodox liturgies, sacraments, and hymnody with radical feminist rituals and songs that focus on women's suffering and victimization and obsessively glorify women's bodies and sexuality.

• The demand for rigid quotas for identical participation of women in church life and work.

• The promotion of easy-to-get divorces, abortion on demand, and lesbianism as acceptable lifestyle choices. We repudiate tolerance for sinful behavior patterns that stem from making misguided assumptions that pleasure produces human fulfillment and that such fulfillment is the main object of life.

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OUR PERSONAL PRIORITIES

There are those whose feminism is a means to power and self-actualization. Our vision of womanhood is different. True power and self-fulfillment are by-products of a rightly ordered life, not its goals. As heirs of a tradition of strong, capable Christian women whose influence on the world has been positive and uplifting, our aspiration is to ennoble women in the service of Christ. Specifically, we pledge:

To Live Holy Lives. Recognizing the imperative to live in right relationship with God, we will celebrate the atonement of Jesus Christ and declare our allegiance to His Lordship. Filled with wonder and joy, we will worship the triune God. We will aspire to the highest standards of Christian morality and virtue by living an "examined life" enabled by God's Holy Spirit.

To Develop Strong Families. Whether we are married or single, we will choose a radical and sacrificial commitment to strengthening our families. Realizing that successful family life is integral to any other right definition of success, we will make the development of strong family life for ourselves and others a priority in our lives, including our time, interests, and material wealth.

To Embrace Our Calling to Authentic Service to Others and the Church. We will consider it an obligation, freely assumed, to be diligent servants of God and stewards of God's world around us. We will help build strong communities, help strengthen mediating institutions, and live justly among friends and neighbors. We will have special concern for those among us who are poor, defenseless, or who are suffering.

To Be Good Citizens. We resolve to participate in public discourse about the issues and values that are fundamental to our Christian worldview and to do so with civility and forthrightness. We will endeavor to live lives of integrity and to model the virtues that are necessary to perpetuate a democratic and civil society. We resolve to confront the divisive and destructive forces that could readily undermine our own democracy.

To Fulfill Our Worldwide Obligations. As Christians with an international perspective, we will offer the blessings of the Judeo-Christian moral order and the Gospel of Jesus Christ to women and men around the world. We will support the oppressed, especially women and children, and those who are persecuted for their religious faith. We will stand with those of all races who aspire to freedom, peace, and justice.

To Build the Church. We will uphold the "holy catholic church" as the body and bride of Christ. We will work through prayer and discipleship for the transformation of lives through Jesus Christ. We will be faithful to the Great Commission of the Church by proclaiming Christ's work and teachings, confident that these will produce profound spiritual and social impact.

OUR CORPORATE PLEDGE OF ACTION

Together, as women of faith, we will focus on three significant areas of engagement:

We Will Work to Reverse Detrimental Cultural Trends. We affirm democracy as the type of government that holds the most promise for the just and good ordering of society and that best protects human rights and dignity. But we acknowledge that democracy, at its best, is a fragile and often flawed experiment. The greater freedom we enjoy in Western society has created an environment where the misuses of freedom have produced social disintegration. Every person, endowed with inalienable rights, is also obligated to exercise personal and social responsibility. Today, the democratic experiment faces perhaps its gravest threat—a cultural crisis that is at its core a crisis of faith.

We will provide leadership toward responsible involvement in public life by identifying and responding to the dominant cultural ideas that destroy a just and good social order. We will work to counter the destructive movements that undermine the values and covenant relationships that are necessary to shape and nurture a democratic citizenry. At home and abroad, we will seek to serve as moral agents to build rightly ordered and just societies respecting the dignity of all persons.

We Will Expose the Assumptions at the Foundation of the Radical Feminists' Philosophy. We are especially concerned about the effects on women of contemporary cultural trends. We decry the erroneous thinking about human nature, sin, and utopian expectations of society that have produced a pervasive sense of emptiness. The notion of women's autonomy—including absolute control over our own bodies—leaves us with an unrealistic sense of human power and an exaggerated sense of independence from the consequences of our attitudes and actions. The denial of the transcendent God who orders the universe and directs our lives leaves us with societal chaos and the absence of any objective standard of meaning. Most especially, it is the authority of the one true God, in whose image male and female are made, that insures the dignity and equality of women and men.

We will counter the influence of extremists within the feminist movement. We will make clear the agendas and programs that harm efforts to enhance the equality, dignity, and freedom of women. And we

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will expose and counter extreme, radical initiatives that demean rather than liberate women, that destroy women's lives and enslave their spirits.

We Will Press for a Renewal of Biblical Orthodoxy in the Church and for a More Central Role for Faith in Society. Many of our churches are excessively influenced, and some even dominated, by radical ideologies whose agendas contradict the Scriptures and historic teachings that are the foundation of Christian faith. The most likely outcomes of the radical agendas are often obscured by lofty-sounding purposes and goals.

We will unite with women of faith who will agree to press for the reform and renewal of our churches. We will be bold in proclaiming the Gospel, the redemptive, transforming power of Jesus Christ. We will work to strengthen those aspects within the Church that affirm the time-honored truths of the Gospel. While we proclaim the intrinsic freedom of each person in Christ, we will seek to rejuvenate the worldwide Christian witness.

We will unite with women of faith to press for a more central role for faith in American society. The coarsening of our culture and the other ills of our society are the inevitable result of allowing faith to become not just sidelined but trivialized in American life. We will work to restore the solid foundation of American culture—biblical orthodoxy in the Church and faith both as a driving force in our personal lives and as a central building block of our society.

SELECTED ENDORSEMENTS

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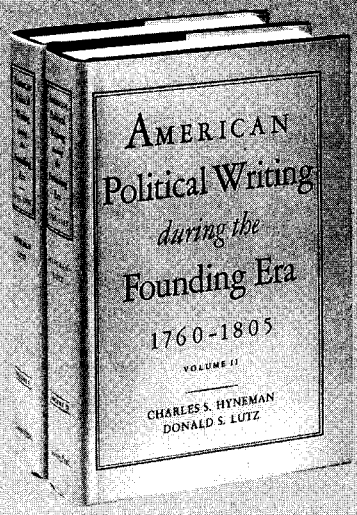

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Books In Review

Accomplices to Genocide?

THE MYTH OF RESCUE: WHY THE DEMOCRACIES COULD NOT HAVE SAVED MORE JEWS FROM THE NAZIS. By WILLIAM D. RUBINSTEIN. *Routledge. 267 pp. $25.*

Reviewed by Matthew Berke

THERE IS NOW a large and growing body of Holocaust scholarship that blames the democracies—especially Britain and the United States—for not preventing or limiting the destruction of European Jewry. The Allies, it is said, should have removed immigration barriers to enable Jews to escape Hitler's Final Solution; they should have bombed the extermination facilities at Auschwitz; they should have ransomed or negotiated for Jewish lives. Historian David Wyman set the tone of current scholarly discussion when he described the democracies as "passive accomplices" to the Holocaust. Thanks largely to documentary films on the subject, the assumption of Allied culpability has moved beyond the academic arena into the broader public consciousness.

MATTHEW BERKE *is Managing Editor of* FIRST THINGS.

William D. Rubinstein's new book, *The Myth of Rescue*, is a comprehensive attack on such interpretations. According to Rubinstein,

> No Jew who perished in the Nazi Holocaust could have been saved by any action which the Allies could have taken at the time, given what was actually known about the Holocaust, what was *actually proposed* at the time, and what was realistically possible. If there are any exceptions at all to this statement, their numbers may be measured in the dozens or hundreds rather than in some higher figure. *All* of the many studies which criticize the Allies (and the Jewish communities of the democracies) for having failed to rescue Jews during the Holocaust are inaccurate and misleading, their arguments illogical and ahistorical. . . . Hitler, the Nazis, and their accomplices—and only they—bear full and total responsibility for the Holocaust.

Many of Rubinstein's arguments have been made before, by, among others, the late Lucy Dawidowicz, the eminent Holocaust historian to whom this volume is dedicated. But *The Myth of Rescue* presses the case

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further, marshals more evidence, and engages more objections than anyone else has. It is, in short, an important and courageous book, though not an unflawed one. The author seems to want go beyond simply exculpating the democracies from the worst allegations and insinuations of the "passive accomplice" school—a much-needed corrective—and to present their behavior as virtually exemplary—a less tenable project. Thus a certain tendency to hyperbole: e.g., *No* Jews could have been saved by *any* additional Allied action, and *all* historical accounts denying this are illogical and ahistorical. Taken with this caveat, however, *The Myth of Rescue* is an indispensable work, even if it is not in all respects definitive.

Rubinstein is concerned with two largely separate issues: judgment of Western immigration policy toward Jewish refugees *before the war*, and the Allies' alleged failure to rescue Jews from Hitler's Final Solution *during the war*. The refugee question, Rubinstein stresses, applies almost exclusively to the Jews of Germany (and, by extension, of Austria and western Czechoslovakia, which were incorporated into the Greater Reich by annexation in 1938). They were at least free to seek sanctuary abroad in the prewar years, when the Nazis' Jewish policy consisted merely of persecution and expulsion. Western refugee policy was largely irrelevant, however, to the plight of the great mass of Holocaust victims, i.e., those Jews who were trapped in countries occupied by Germany during the war, when the Nazis implemented their Final Solution of imprisonment and extermination. (Hitler's personal obsession with the Jews and his singular role in pushing the Holocaust is a recurrent theme throughout the book.)

Contrary to the popular image, Rubinstein says, Western refugee policy was, all things considered, both "remarkably generous" and notably "successful." By Rubinstein's accounting, 72 percent of Germany's half-million Jews successfully emigrated during the years leading up to World War II, including 83 percent of German Jewish children and youth. (Other historians have cited lower figures.) There would have been 100 percent emigration, he says, had it not been for the unexpected outbreak of hostilities in September 1939. The United States was particularly helpful, taking in 161,000 German Jews, 35 percent of all its immigrants between 1933 and 1942. Most of these refugees arrived after *Kristallnacht*, a nationwide pogrom in Germany in November 1938; over the next two years, Rubinstein says, *more than half* of all immigrants to the U.S. (52 percent) were Jews fleeing the Reich. Britain, on the whole, had a similarly creditable record. In addition, both the United States and Britain pressured third countries to accept many other refugees. Though no single country was willing to accept an unlimited number of refugees, *collectively* the free nations did take in those seeking sanctuary.

Of course, many of the Jewish refugees who emigrated to countries other than Britain or the United States ended up in the gas chambers anyway, having relocated to nations that were eventually conquered and occupied by Germany. This fact, for

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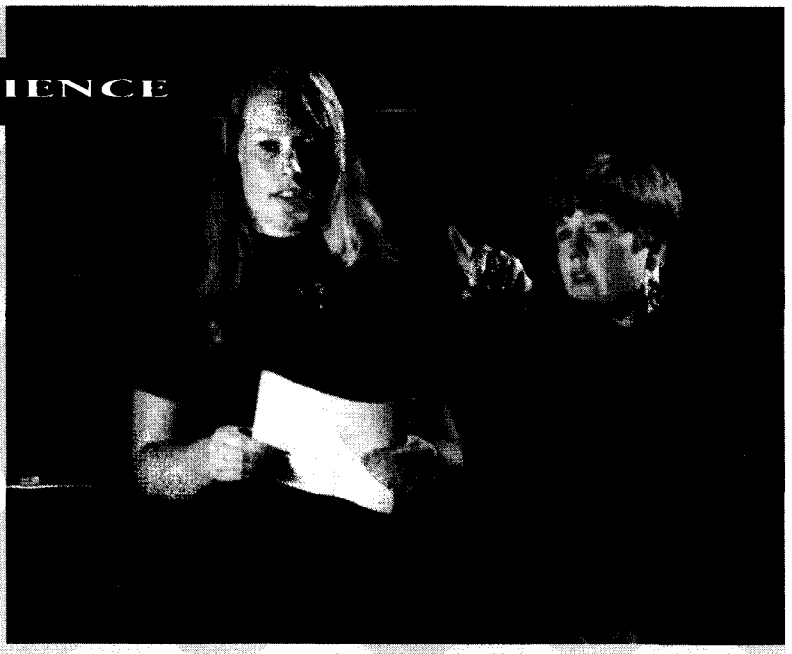
Rubinstein, is cause for sorrow, but not for moral outrage against the democracies. To blame them for evil design or cruel indifference assumes they could see then what we now see only with hindsight. No one in the 1930s knew that genocide was in the near future; there were dark forebodings and a handful of prophetic utterances, but as a widely recognized public fact capable of shaping policy it simply was not seen.

Even to the extent that Nazi evil was appreciated, no one in the 1930s knew with certainty that there would be another world war, and, if there were, which countries would be overrun by German arms. If Britain and the United States refused to accept all Jewish applicants for immigration in the 1930s, this refusal was hardly done with the understanding that resettlement in, say, the Netherlands or France represented a death sentence. Dutch neutrality had been respected by Germany in World War I, for instance, and that country was regarded as a congenial environment by many German Jews. As for France, Rubinstein stresses that no one at the beginning of the war thought that the French—with a standing army of 1.5 million and an alliance with Britain—would be vanquished in a mere six weeks, much less that within two years ninety thousand Jews would be deported for extermination. Not even Palestine would have guaranteed Jewish safety, since Rommel's

THE CALVIN EXPERIENCE



Debra L. Freeberg

Ph.D. from University of Pittsburgh; playwright of *Good Boogie* (1997), *And the Book Ran Away with the Spoon* (1993) and *Moving Day* (winner of 1983 Pennsylvania Council on the Arts Playwriting Fellowship); actress; producer; director of the Calvin Theatre Company; professor of courses in theatre and rhetoric at Calvin.

William D. Romanowski

Ph.D. from Bowling Green State University; author of *Pop Culture Wars: Religion and the Role of Entertainment in American Life* (InterVarsity Press, 1996) and *Dancing in the Dark* (William B. Eerdmans, 1991); musician; raconteur; nationally known scholar/critic of American culture; Calvin professor of communication arts and sciences.

Quentin J. Schultze

Ph.D. from University of Illinois; author of *Communication Through the Eyes of Faith* (forthcoming from Harper & Row) and *Televangelism and American Culture* (Baker Books, 1991); nationally known expert/scholar in mass media, technology and culture; professor of communication arts and science at Calvin.

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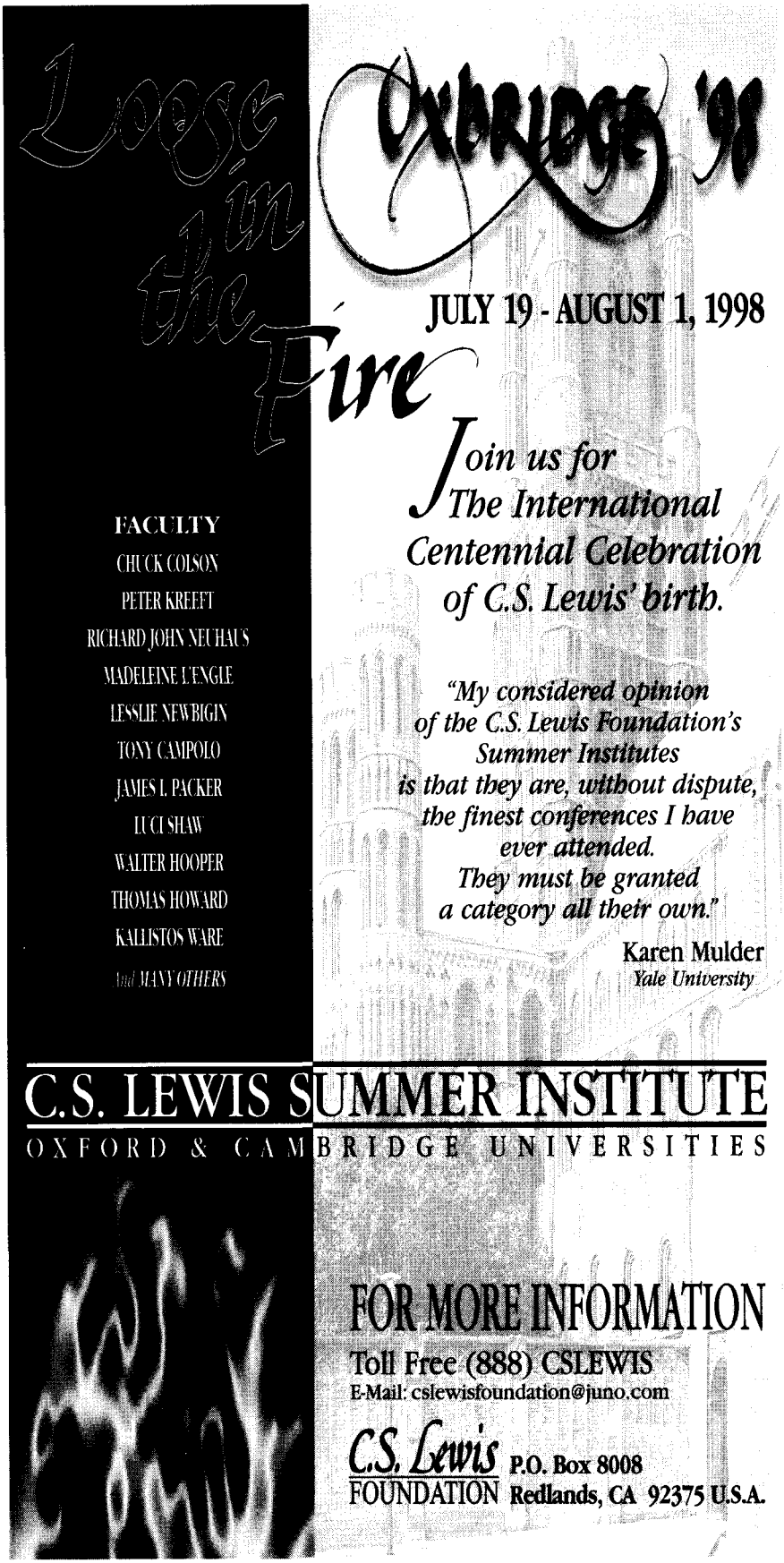
Afrika Corps came within a hair of sweeping Britain out of the Near East altogether. (Had there been a larger Jewish population in Palestine, Rubinstein notes, Hitler might have been tempted to divert resources from the Russian front in order to destroy them.) The significant fact, repeated many times in *The Myth of Rescue*, is that the democracies (with Switzerland as a possible exception) never returned Jewish refugees to Reich-dominated territory *once the Final Solution had begun.*

ON THE BASIS of this evidence (and there is quite a bit more than what is sketched above), Rubinstein effectively discredits the charge that the democracies were in any sense accomplices to genocide. Unfortunately, for some reason, he consistently seems to minimize public or governmental pettiness and bigotry that tarnished a relatively decent record. In discussing the level of American anti-Semitism, for instance, Rubinstein cites opinion polls from the late thirties which demonstrate that public opinion was overwhelmingly anti-Nazi; but his discussion of anti-Semitism as a marginal phenomenon does not ring true to most people's memory of the time, or to the statistics he himself uses to demonstrate its marginality. In 1938-39, for instance, 12 percent of Americans polled said that they would *participate in anti-Semitic campaigns* should they arise in the United States; at the same time Rubinstein says that "core" anti-Semitism was probably between 5 and 12 percent. Wouldn't one assume a base figure of 12 rather than 5? Might not the difference have been significant for the generosity or stinginess of refugee policy?

Rubinstein acknowledges that "many individual cases of bureaucratic pettifoggery and narrow-mindedness strongly suggestive of anti-Semitism can doubtless be found." But the implications of this are never developed. Lucy Dawidowicz (in an essay that originally appeared in *This World*, the predecessor of FIRST THINGS) observed that U.S. government officials in charge of refugee matters applied quota restrictions "in



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a more mean-spirited manner than the law required. . . . Had those regulations been more generously interpreted, it is now generally agreed, some additional tens of thousands of refugees could have been admitted to the United States even under the then existing laws. They would have been lives saved, lives subtracted from the awesome statistic of six million murdered Jews." This observation does not imply a wholesale indictment of the U.S. government or the American people. But surely there is justification for some criticism, and decrying missed opportunities cannot simply be discounted as "illogical and ahistorical" because there was insufficient knowledge about the *ultimate* nature of Nazi intentions (as if their immediate violence were not bad enough or well-known at the time).

THE MOST DEVASTATING accusations against the democracies, however, concern not refugees before the war but captive people being extermined during the war. The Allies, it is said, "did nothing" during the frenzy of murder that began in the summer of 1941. This criticism is often vague or takes the form of innuendo, since even the harshest critics recognize that the slaughterhouse of Eastern Europe was far beyond the reach of any Allied force.

Somewhat closer to reality, Allied governments and military leaders have been blamed for not bombing the rail lines leading to the death camps or the extermination facilities themselves. The railroad argument, however, turns out on close inspection to be another nonargument with no credence among serious scholars: attacking the transportation system would have been useless and dangerous, since the Germans were very skilled at rerouting their trains and restoring damaged tracks and bridges. As for arguments that the Allies could have bombed the extermination facilities at Auschwitz, Rubinstein reminds his readers that Auschwitz, located in southwestern Poland, was beyond the reach of Allied bombers until airfields in Italy were acquired in December 1943. By this time the great mass of Holocaust victims had already been killed. Had the Auschwitz-Birkenau complex been destroyed, it is true, there would have been at least a chance to save hundreds of thousands of European Jews not yet exterminated. But, as Rubinstein points out, only a chance: Even after Auschwitz stopped functioning in November 1944, the Nazis still practiced mass murder by death marches, shooting, and starvation.

The main reason that Auschwitz was never bombed, according to Rubinstein, is that no one proposed it until the spring of 1944, and then only tentatively. For very understandable reasons having nothing to do with cowardice, sloth, or anti-

God inscribed in the humanity of man and woman the vocation, and thus the capacity and responsibility, of love and communion. Love is therefore the fundamental and innate vocation of every human being.

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Semitism, there was never a unified, unambivalent lobby for such action. Some Jewish leaders and groups said it should be done, while others said no. The U.S. War Refugee Board, for instance, which was extremely sensitive to the urgings of the American Jewish community, specifically rejected such a possibility until November 1944 (well after such an operation would have been relevant).

The reasons for such reticence are not hard to understand. Civilian and military leaders, whether in government or the Jewish community, did not want Allied bombers to be responsible for slaughtering concentration camp prisoners. It is true that Jews already there were slated for death anyway and a successful raid might have saved the multitudes behind them. But given the inaccuracy of bombing in that time, there was an understandable fear that an attack on Auschwitz would kill large numbers of Jews but fail to destroy the gas chambers and crematoria. Borrowing from military historians, Rubinstein presents a full technical and logistical refutation of those who have argued the easy feasibility of bombing Auschwitz. The clinching aspect of this argument, however, is not so much technical as political: viewed in its actual historical context, the case for bombing Auschwitz was made too late, too tentatively, by too few.

The rest of *The Myth of Rescue* is taken up with a discussion of various other rescue proposals, including ransom payments, commando raids, and threats of reprisal. It is difficult to do justice to Rubinstein's analyses on these and other topics. In general, it seems, the proposals, if not utterly impossible, were at least improbable, and the best ideas appear to have emerged in hindsight. At minimum, Rubinstein effectively demolishes the notion that there were a variety of *likely* rescue plans available to Allied leaders, but which for nefarious reasons were not tried.

RUBINSTEIN DOES NOT attempt a psychological or sociological explanation for the tendency to implicate the democracies in the Holocaust. Doubtless, this trend has some connection to the broader historiography of victimhood, which reflexively vilifies Western Civilization; and the internal politics of the Jewish community has generated a certain amount of finger-pointing. But there are, I think, additional—more substantive—reasons. The sense of rage and guilt over the Holocaust (a phenomenon not confined to Jews) simply cannot find an adequate expression or means of resolution. The death of Hitler, the destruction of the Nazi regime, the punishment of various war criminals—it all feels anticlimactic and unsatisfying. Despite the constant stream of books and articles on the subject, we are still very far from understanding and coming to terms

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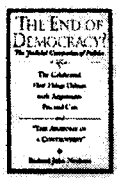

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with this explosion of evil that Winston Churchill saw early on as "probably the most horrible single crime in the whole history of the world."

That there should be an overflow of wrath among students of the Holocaust is in some sense natural. This does not mean, however, that all scandalous accusations should be nurtured. There is, for instance, something terribly unsavory in the animus called forth against the two great philo-Semitic leaders, Roosevelt and Churchill, who prodded their reluctant nations into preparedness, organized unprecedented industrial mobilizations, then planned and prosecuted the war to a successful conclusion. Whatever we finally make of Hitler and the Holocaust, we must always recall Emil Fackenheim's famous dictum about granting no posthumous victories to Hitler. Surely, included within this imperative is to abstain from poisoning our faith in Western democratic institutions, which, while flawed and guilty in many respects, do not deserve the calumny poured upon them in many recent Holocaust histories. We hardly honor the martyred millions by bearing false witness against our culture and civilization. William Rubinstein's powerful brief against such excesses will, one hopes, be instrumental in restoring intellectual rigor and responsibility to the continuing discussion on this aspect of the Holocaust.

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I Take You . . .

FOR THE LOVE OF CHILDREN: GENETIC TECHNOLOGY AND THE FUTURE OF THE FAMILY. By TED PETERS. *Westminster/John Knox. 227 pp. $18 paper.*

***Reviewed by* Nancy R. Pearcey**

WHEN SEMINARY STUDENT Philip Holck got married, he exchanged two sets of vows: the first with his bride, the second with her five-year-old son. He knelt to face the boy and said, "I, Philip, take you Matthew to be my son, to join with you, to share my life with you, to play with you, to teach and love you until death parts us." Ted Peters opens his latest book with this story to illustrate what he regards as the ideal form of parental commitment: an explicit, articulated covenant. As reproductive technology alters the relationship between parents and children, he says, the base of the family must shift from biology to choice.

As professor of theology at Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary (part of the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley), Peters recently chaired a three-year, $300,000 study for the Human Genome Project on the ethics of genetic technology. His conclusion is that the procedures

NANCY R. PEARCEY *is Fellow and Policy Director of the Wilberforce Forum.*

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themselves are morally neutral. The danger lies in our response to them—in whether we value the children thus produced. Peters' goal is to propose an ethics with enough moral muscle to prevent the devaluation of children, while sanctioning the ongoing development of genetic science.

Peters foresees two possible risks to children. The first is "commodification." As technology offers greater choice and control over the reproductive process, the babies that result may come to be regarded as artifacts—as products we plan, create, modify, and improve. In addition, the costs of high-tech reproductive services may "make procreation look more and more like business deals and consumer purchasing," where children are merchandise, "evaluated according to standards of quality control." And "if the paying parents do not believe they are getting their money's worth, they may reject the product."

The second risk is that parents may fail to bond with children who do not share their genetic heritage. Today it is technically possible for a child to have only one genetic parent (through cloning), or as many as five "parents" (sperm donor, egg donor, surrogate mother, and the parents who raise the child). If traditional ethics grounds family responsibility in biological relationship, how will parents respond when biological lineages are mixed? Peters worries that parents who employ a donor father or surrogate mother might be dogged by "a sense of shame," passing on to the children a sense of being "second best." Parents might even reject children not genetically related to them.

To forestall these dangers, Peters proposes an ethics based on a straightforward principle: "God loves each of us regardless of our genetic make-up, and we should do likewise." Whether a child is the result of designer genes, or of a genetic experiment gone tragically awry, God loves him and so should we. Whether a child is genetically related to us or unrelated, a result of donor eggs or sperm, God loves him and so should we.

So far so good. Peters' concern for the well-being of children is almost palpable. But he makes several subsidiary assumptions that, in the end, undercut that goal. For one thing, his ethics is "consequentialist": It "places the love of children first," and judges new technologies solely by whether they lead to "this greater end." This means he treats every procedure as morally neutral—in vitro fertilization, use of donor eggs or sperm, surrogate motherhood, frozen embryos, cloning, egg fusion, nuclear transplantation, genetic engineering. Any of these may become unethical if the child is reduced to an artifact, but any of them may also be an expression of love. Can't we say, Peters asks, that "a

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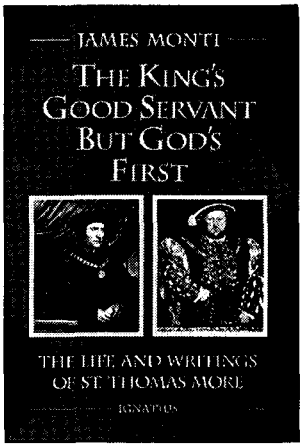

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family willing to spend its resources" on such costly procedures "is demonstrating its potential to love that child"? Similarly, abortion is unethical if "based solely on the desires of the parents without regard for the well-being of the child." But in cases of severe genetic disorders, abortion is an "expression of [the parents'] love . . . an act of compassion."

In short, Peters' ethics draws no lines, places no act out of bounds. Every act receives its ethical content solely from the parents' subjective intention. Peters' consequentialism declines to do the hard work of morally evaluating the new reproductive and genetic technologies, optimistically assuming that any procedure can be bent to serve "the love of children." It lacks the moral rigor to defend against technologies that may be intrinsically immoral.

ANOTHER PROBLEMATIC element is Peters' proposal to transfer the foundation of the family from biology to choice. This has intense personal import for him, since he himself has several adopted children. To press the point, a photo on the book cover includes his entire family: It's visually obvious that his five children represent four different races. Thus "the love of children," including genetically unrelated children, is a personal motto for Peters. He believes it is broad enough to cover surrogacy, egg and sperm donors, genetic alteration of the embryo, etc. All are in principle like adoption, he argues, since all involve adults choosing to raise children who are genetically different from themselves. He urges even biological families to make explicit covenants, thereby importing "an element of adoption into every adult's relationship to a child."

Yet the elevation of choice into the defining feature of family relationship is much more radical than Peters seems to suppose. It means he must jettison historical forms of Christian ethics that define the family by biological relationship—an "outmoded," "prescientific" definition based on what he calls "the inheritance myth." He also abandons any notion of natural law, arguing that there is "no necessary connection . . . between the transcendent Creator's will and our creaturely nature." Indeed, he rejects "any premodern formalism based on divine dicta or traditional authority or natural law that would try to make an end run around choice."

To construct a new ethics, Peters borrows themes from process theology, which teaches that humans are "cocreators" with God in an evolutionary process, helping to bring about an open and unpredictable eschatological future. He interprets this to mean we cannot invoke the past—neither creation (how God made us) nor history (universal human experience)—to ground ethical guidelines for the emerging technologies. In-

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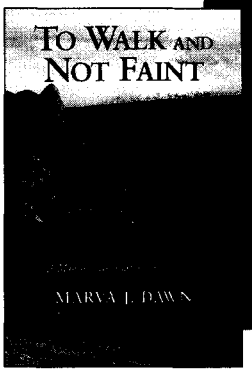

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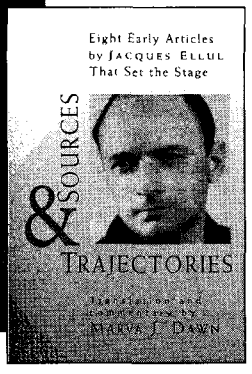

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stead, his ethics is "proleptic," shaped by a vision of the future Kingdom of God, which we help build through our creative efforts: "Rather than appeal to reactionary variants of biological essentialism to obstruct the creative use of reproductive technologies, proleptic ethics encourages their use" as a means toward "the love of children."

Once again, however, Peters' subsidiary assumptions undercut his goal. The flip side of the maxim that our moral obligation does not depend on biology is that biology itself imposes no obligation—that parents are not responsible in any special way for their own biological children unless they choose to be. Peters' proposal would transform the family along the model of liberal individualism, turning it into a collection of what Michael Sandel calls "unencumbered selves," bound by no attachments or obligations they do not choose for themselves. If this ideal were widely accepted, children would be cut adrift, without any moral claim on their own parents. Does Peters really believe parents would be more committed to their children if they thought they had no natural obligation to them?

As Sandel notes, many Americans have already absorbed the image of the unencumbered self, and the consequence has been a massive *abandonment* of children. Shocking numbers of fathers desert their families; millions of mothers abort their children. Taking a different angle, the majority of child abuse cases are at the hands of a genetically unrelated male—a stepfather or the mother's boyfriend. In light of these grim facts, Peters' optimism about adults relating to children by choice is, to put it gently, implausible.

These objections seem fairly obvious. Yet surprisingly, Peters does not deal with them, nor with others that might be raised. Much of the book is devoted to surveying and disputing other scholars (mostly Catholic ethicists who appeal to natural law); comparatively little space is given to developing and defending Peters' own views. Often he merely declares them in manifesto-like statements: "Any attempt to bypass choice and construct our ethics on a foundation of now-outdated cultural or biological constraints is bound to fail us"; or, "Mutual love, not biology, creates true kinship."

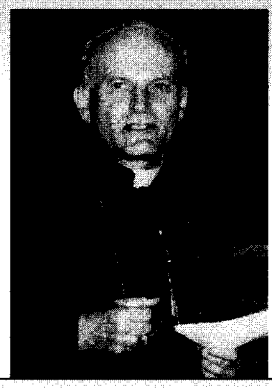
THE MOST PROMINENT argument Peters offers for his position is simply that choice is inevitable. Genetic science and reproductive technologies are expanding choice into areas once left to nature. Choice is also the dominant ideology: "Whether we like it or not, the end of the road for a disintegrating liberal society is individual choice. There is no escape." It does Christians no good to "whimper about individual choice and decry the

KAROL WOJTYŁA

The Thought of the Man Who Became Pope John Paul II

Rocco Buttiglione

Foreword by Michael Novak



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pursuit of self-fulfillment. These are simply the cultural givens of our epoch."

Peters does make a half-hearted effort to garner biblical support as well, arguing that Jesus "gave no priority to one's biological kin." He quotes Matthew 12:50: "Whoever does the will of my Father who is in heaven is my brother and sister and mother." But, in apparent contradiction, he acknowledges that these words actually assume "a positive view of the family"—that "Jesus takes our positive experience of intrafamilial love [and] expands it beyond genetic kin limits."

A comprehensive biblical ethics would begin not with Jesus but Genesis. Creation remains normative even for a "proleptic" ethics, for, as Peters' own Lutheran tradition teaches, the "order of creation" is not abrogated by the "order of redemption." Indeed, redemption is largely a reconciliation and restoration of the original creation, which God pronounced "very good." Creation teaches that we are not merely disembodied wills, forming families by choice; we are biological creatures who procreate "after our kind." Moreover, we are called to be thankful for these biological bonds: to honor the parents we have not chosen and to love the children we have not chosen, receiving them as from the hand of God. The family provides a rich metaphor for the Kingdom of God precisely because it is the primary experience we have of an obligation that transcends mere rational choice and is constitutive of our very nature.

Finally, Peters' voluntarist model of the family has ominous political implications. If children must be chosen, if they do not belong to their own parents as gifts from God, whom *do* they belong to? Answer: the state. Peters does not say so outright but suggests as much in one telling sentence: "Society places its children in the care of rearing parents as a trust." *Society* gives us children? Society gives us *its* children? This way lies the radical moral isolation of both parents and children, reducing them to atomistic dependence on the state. That is not where Peters wants to end up, but that is where his argument leads. I suggest we not follow—and not least "for the love of children."

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SALT OF THE EARTH: THE CHURCH AT THE END OF THE CENTURY. By JOSEPH RATZINGER. An Interview with PETER SEEWALD. *Ignatius Press. 301 pp. $12.95 paper.*

Reviewed by **Thomas D. Williams**

WHAT DOES THE Pope read when confined to bed? During his stint in the Gemelli hospital last year, John Paul II's bedside book was *Salt of the Earth*, by Joseph Ratzinger. This may not be a decisive argument for reading the book, but it's not bad as endorsements go.

Salt of the Earth has an unusual genesis. Early in 1996 German freelance journalist Peter Seewald, a fallen-away Catholic, wrote an abrasive article on Cardinal Ratzinger for the *Süddeutsche Zeitung*. Though German Catholics by and large take a dim view of the Roman Curia, Seewald's readers cried foul, accusing him of having portrayed Ratzinger in a simplistic and stereotypical way. To redeem himself, Seewald got in touch with Cardinal Ratzinger and proposed a thoroughgoing interview with the prelate, to be published as a full-length book. Perhaps surprisingly, the Cardinal acquiesced. Shortly afterward the two retired to Villa Cavalletti, a retreat house outside Rome, for a weekend interview session. Thus *Salt of the Earth* was born.

To date, the German edition, *Salz der Erde*, has sold more than seventy

FR. THOMAS D. WILLIAMS *is Rector of the General Directorate of the Legionaries of Christ.*

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thousand copies, which makes it a runaway bestseller by German standards, and Ratzinger's most popular work ever in his home country. It has been dubbed the new *Ratzinger Report,* and certain similarities justify the comparison. The *Ratzinger Report* was the fruit of an interview with Italian journalist Vittorio Messori, who would later be responsible for the 1994 book-interview with Pope John Paul, *Crossing the Threshold of Hope.* The *Report* turned out to be a sort of State-of-the-Church address by Ratzinger, who was still cutting his teeth as Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith when the book was released in 1985. *Salt of the Earth* likewise presents, among other things, a global overview of the situation of the Church at the end of the second millennium.

Yet there are significant differences, too. For one thing, as Ratzinger himself acknowledges, passing time leaves its mark. The dozen intervening years between the two interviews seem to have mellowed the already introspective Ratzinger, and *Salt of the Earth* presents us with a more seasoned Prefect. Furthermore, Messori is a fervent Italian Christian, having abandoned his former agnosticism, while Seewald is a disaffected German Catholic, whose questions reflect his own doubts and difficulties with the Church. The question-answer format of *Salt of the Earth* also differs considerably from the more uniform, narrative style of the *Report,* and more faithfully reflects the spontaneous interplay between the Cardinal and his inquisitor. All in all, conditions couldn't have been better for a literary chef d'oeuvre.

Unfortunately, Seewald doesn't always prove up to the task. His imprecise terminology, occasional dips into banality, and desultory interrogation limit the work's seriousness and fluidity. He persistently follows up issues of small import while missing precious opportunities to probe the Cardinal's thought on weightier matters.

That said, there are two things that partially redeem Seewald's folly. First, in representing a world that no longer believes, he provides a point of contact for the many who are out of touch with religious faith. Seewald formulates questions typical of a certain breed of Catholic who religiously reads the *New York Times* but at best has skimmed the headlines of the Catechism. He awkwardly moves between the superficial and the profound, the laudatory and the impertinent, the penetrating and the puerile. This can be unnerving to the reader, but Ratzinger responds to Seewald's queries with a serenity, lucidity, and, above all, patience that would seem sufficient to dissolve the image of intransigence and severity with which he is commonly associated. Hence the second important merit of Seewald's work: it furnishes the reader with a rare window into Ratzinger's personality and inner life. Perhaps more than any other of Ratzinger's numerous works, *Salt of the Earth* grants a glimpse of the man beneath the miter.

The first of the book's three parts deals with the person of Joseph Ratzinger: his origins, vocation, theological and episcopal career, and his relationship with Pope John Paul. Particularly striking is Ratzinger's description of his youth, especially during the years of National Socialism. Having grown up in a Germany dominated by Nazi propaganda and the suppression of heterodox opinions, he grew notably inimical to authoritarianism and ideologies that attempt to stamp out uncomfortable truths, especially the truth about God and the human person. Once we have suppressed the truth, Ratzinger says, we are left only with our personal choice, which is necessarily arbitrary. "When decisions are left solely to the domain of the will, whether particular or collective, man is debased." Like Pope John Paul, Ratzinger believes that the proclamation of the truth is the greatest guarantee of human freedom. This conviction is enshrined in his episcopal

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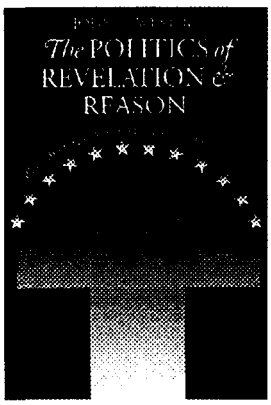

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motto, *Cooperatores Veritatis*, which he adopted when ordained archbishop of Munich-Freising in 1977.

The second part of the book presents the Cardinal's sketch of the state of the Church in the world, with country-by-country snapshots of some key areas, and then confronts the thorny issues where the Church often meets with criticism. Ratzinger demonstrates a broad grasp of the present ecclesial environment throughout the world and the cultural obstacles and opportunities vis-à-vis the new evangelization. Among the regional vignettes, the situation of the Church in Germany receives the most attention, while many other countries are quickly passed over. Some American readers may be put off by the Cardinal's unwillingness to analyze particular religious phenomena in the U.S.—because "I know America too little"—along with his favorable and perhaps ingenuous citation of Hillary Clinton.

Seewald has Ratzinger run the gauntlet of what the latter terms "the canon of criticisms" against the Church, starting with her historical "errors" and ending with the celebrated modern points of contention, including everything from papal infallibility to contraceptives to women priests to abortion to priestly celibacy. One is impressed both with the precision and measure of Ratzinger's comments and with the genuinely humble and respectful attitude with which he treats Seewald's various doubts. He never makes light of the difficulties voiced by his interviewer, and he addresses all of them with understanding and clarity. In fact, his realism, openness to criticism, and evident humanity are disarming both to the reader and, it would seem, to the journalist.

The final seventy pages of the book examine where the Church has come from and where she is going. Here the reader gets a taste of Ratzinger's priorities for the Church and how he expects her relationship with other groups and institutions to unfold. On many fronts his prognosis is bleak, and *Salt of the Earth* won't do much to soften his reputation as a pessimist. Ratzinger's Augustinian spirituality downplays man's earthly accomplishments and highlights instead the "City of God," the kingdom wrought by God's grace that is not of this world. Borrowing John Courtney Murray's useful distinction between two valid Christian orientations, an incarnational humanism (which emphasizes Christianity's immanence and the close link between grace and the nature it perfects), and an eschatological humanism (which focuses on Christianity's otherworldliness and man's pilgrim condition), Ratzinger clearly leans toward the latter—whereas John Paul II tends toward the former.

CONCERNING PROSPECTS for ecumenism, for example, Ratzinger is typically guarded: "I don't dare to hope for a full communion of Christians within history." This reserve hardly seems to square with John Paul's vision of the third millennium as the millennium of Christian unity, as expressed in the encyclical *Ut Unum Sint* or in the Pope's reference to Christians' "confident quest for full communion." Citing examples of ongoing fragmentation of the Christian communions and the formation of new splinter groups—including syncretistic sects with a mix of Christian and pagan elements—Ratzinger points to other objectives. "Much more important is that we accept each other with profound respect and love, that we recognize one another as Christians, and that we endeavor to offer the world a common witness in the essential things, both in favor of a just world order and in giving a response to the great questions about God and about man's origin and destiny." While this mutual acceptance and common witness are clearly of major importance, one hopes the Cardinal's soft-pedalling of efforts toward full communion between the Christian churches won't play at cross-purposes to John Paul's ecumenical program.

The new evangelization receives the same reserved response. Where Pope John Paul confidently proclaims the third millennium a springtime of evangelization, Cardinal Ratzinger presents a scenario of a shrinking Church of minority status, more concerned with creating small pockets of authentic Christian living than influencing the course of society. It would seem that Ratzinger's experience with this century's disastrous attempts at Hegelian Utopianism—both of Marxist and Nietzschean stamp—may have left him with a permanent distaste for pro-

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grams of large-scale social change.

Nonetheless, Ratzinger's eschatological orientation doesn't preclude serious engagement with the world. There is a fine little section near the end of *Salt of the Earth* entitled "Church, State, and Society." Here the Cardinal considers the separation of church and state, tracing it back to the Christian response to the Roman Empire. Ratzinger deems the rediscovery of this separation a positive contribution of the Enlightenment, the negative side being the subjectivization and privatization of religion. Christianity, says Ratzinger, while radically distinct from the state, "has always publically claimed to be not only subjective sentiment, but a truth that is proclaimed in public, that puts norms on society, and that, in a certain measure, is binding also on the state and on the powerful of the world."

I am told that subsequent to the publication of *Salt of the Earth*, Peter Seewald has returned to his Catholic faith and that he attributes his "reversion" to his weekend interview with Cardinal Ratzinger. Perhaps this book will bear more fruit than its author would dare to hope.

Right Thinking

Conservatism: An Anthology of Social and Political Thought. Edited by Jerry Z. Muller. *Princeton University Press. 450 pp. $44.95 cloth, $19.95 paper.*

Reviewed by **Daniel J. Mahoney**

Conservatism has undoubtedly established its presence on the American political and intellectual landscape, but most of us would be at a loss to define it with any kind of precision. To begin with, one must separate American conservatism as a political movement, a broad coalition of forces that defends the integrity of civil society against the collectivist encroachments of the state, from the larger currents of intellectual conservatism that have European origins and are often less libertarian or antistatist in orientation. Despite an occasional nod to Edmund Burke or Friedrich Hayek, most American conservatives actively engaged in political life are singularly uninterested in attaining clarity about the character of conservatism as an intellectual movement.

This should not surprise us, since conservatism entails the rejection of abstract and doctrinaire theoretical approaches to political life. But it was Burke himself who tried to persuade the gentlemen of his day and party that they must defend themselves and political decency in general against theoretical currents that undermined the integrity of "sound practice." So conservatives, who have a distaste for political theories, must nonetheless theorize about politics. Here we arrive at a paradox that Jerry Z. Muller's anthology of conservative thought richly highlights: conservatism is that theory which aims to protect sound practice against corrosive and corrupting theory. It is a political philosophy deeply suspicious of "metaphysical" or "literary" politics.

From David Hume and Edmund Burke to Michael Oakeshott and Friedrich Hayek (each of whom is amply represented and thoughtfully commented upon in this book) conservative theorists have criticized "contractualist" and "constructivist" approaches to political life that ignore the dependence of the social fabric upon institutions, customs, and habits that are not the product of human design. In his excellent introduction, Muller emphasizes the conservative critique of "theory," of what Burke called "the abuse of reason." Muller locates conservatism in an approach that he calls "historical utilitarianism." It emphasizes the wisdom of long-established historical practices, the latent functions served by seemingly obsolete institutions and traditions, the indispensable role of custom and habit as a "second nature," and the unintended consequences that stem from efforts to radically transform the social order. Conservatives, despite their substantive disagreements about the ultimate nature of things, have resisted liberal and radical calls for "transparency" in social life precisely because they understand that society cannot withstand a too systematic or energetic analysis of its sometimes fragile foundations.

But Muller is careful to differentiate conservatism from orthodoxy. He

Daniel J. Mahoney *is Associate Professor of Politics at Assumption College in Worcester, Massachusetts, and the author, most recently, of* DeGaulle: Statesmanship, Grandeur, and Modern Democracy *(Praeger 1996).*

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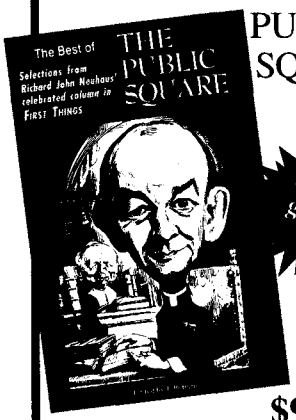

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locates conservatism in a profound skepticism regarding knowledge of the nature of man or a natural order of things—hence his choice of David Hume as the founder of a modern, enlightened, skeptical, and "utilitarian" conservatism. What are we to make of this seemingly idiosyncratic choice of origins?

Muller is undoubtedly correct to distinguish conservatism both from orthodoxy and from a radical conservatism that aims to uproot liberal civilization in the name of vitalistic and nationalist values. But, in my view, he understates the important connections that persist between conservatism and orthodoxy. By "orthodoxy" I mean any political-philosophical approach that admits the possibility and necessity of theoretical metaphysics and philosophical ethics rooted in a reflection on the "nature" of things. Muller is right to emphasize the conservative critique of rationalism and the strongly historicist or anti-universalist character of many conservative thinkers. He is also right to raise the question of whether the conservative emphasis on the utility of institutions and social practices does not ultimately undermine belief in "the truth of existing institutions, or indeed in the idea of truth as such." But that objection to historicist conservatism was raised, as Muller notes, by Leo Strauss, certainly a conservative thinker, at least in the sense that classical political philosophy is a major source of modern conservatism. By overemphasizing the historicist and utilitarian character of conservative thought, Muller inevitably is forced to downplay an equally fundamental conservative theme: the critique of moral and philosophical relativism in the name of a permanent order of things.

I believe that Muller's mistake is rooted in a too facile assimilation of Hume and Burke (Burke attacked metaphysical politics and not meta-

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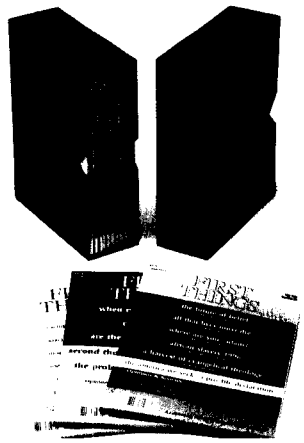

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physics per se, and assuredly believed that custom as "second nature" was deeply rooted in an unchangeable human and social nature) and in a general failure to confront fully the important conservative critique of relativism and historicism. He provides rich selections from Irving Kristol, Peter Berger and Richard John Neuhaus, and the German writer Hermann Lubbe that stress the limits of social and cultural "emancipation." But he understates the anti-relativistic character of that critique because he is rather dogmatically attached to a skeptical (e.g., Humean) conception of conservatism.

It seems to me that a whole range of more or less conservative thinkers aim to steer a middle way between a deductive, natural law approach to political things and the anti-rationalism highlighted by Muller. For example, the Hungarian-born moral and political philosopher Aurel Kolnai speaks for a conservatism that attempts to do justice to the reality of a natural order as well as to the prudential requirements of political life. In a remarkable review of Michael Oakeshott's *Rationalism in Politics* in the English journal *Philosophy* (January 1965) that ought to be read by all self-described conservatives, Kolnai wrote:

> The concept of "nature" has been artificially overworked by metaphysicians of various kinds, but there is something unreal and artificial also in the studied negation of the natural order of things. And this very observation, for what it may be worth, has, I think, a conservative rather than a subversive point.

THIS FUNDAMENTAL caveat aside, Jerry Muller (and Princeton University Press) are to be applauded for providing a first-rate anthology of

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conservative thought. Muller's general introduction, afterword, and particular introductions to the individual selections provide an eloquent and learned overview of some of the greatest conservative themes.

His selections are drawn broadly from British, French, and German as well as American writers and hence avoid the parochialism typical in American discussions of conservatism. Some of the readings are little gems: Justin Moser's 1772 warning about the dangers associated with "Diminished Disgrace of Whores and Their Children in Our day"; T. E. Hulme's "Essays on War" (1916), which respond to Bertrand Russell's arguments for pacifism; and Winston Churchill's "Speech on Rebuilding the House of Commons" (1943), a remarkable critique of "rationalism in politics" by a Burkean-minded statesman.

But the book is nonetheless marred by the absence of any selection from Alexis de Tocqueville (whose influence on contemporary conservative theorists is duly noted by Muller) or of any contemporary French conservative liberals, such as Raymond Aron or Bertrand de Jouvenel, who operate within a broadly Tocquevillian framework. In my view, no thinker better highlights the necessity or dignity of intermediary associations (a conservative theme par excellence) nor provides a deeper account of the dependence of modern liberal democracy upon the "moral capital" of premodern times. Better than any other conservative theorist, Tocqueville appreciated both the comparative justice of modern democracy as well as the threat it poses to the higher excellences of human nature. And I know of no figure who better inoculates thoughtful people against the utopian temptations of both left and right.

But omissions and biases notwithstanding, general readers and scholars alike will find Muller's anthology an excellent place to begin the necessary conversation on the meaning of conservatism in the modern world.

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WHAT SAINT PAUL REALLY SAID: WAS PAUL OF TARSUS THE REAL FOUNDER OF CHRISTIANITY? By N. T. WRIGHT. *Eerdmans. 192 pp. $14 paper.*

PAUL: THE MIND OF THE APOSTLE. By A. N. WILSON. *Norton. 288 pp. $25.*

Reviewed by
Luke Timothy Johnson

AT THE END of his new book on St. Paul, N. T. Wright invites a comparison between his treatment of the apostle and that published shortly before by A. N. Wilson. His title, "what Paul really said," plays off Wilson's "mind of the apostle," and in his final chapter Wright offers his own mostly negative review of Wilson's effort. The packaging may be a bit deceptive, for Wright's last chapter is really an add-on after his own study was "more or less complete," and the largest part of his book develops Wright's own distinctive argument concerning Paul's place in earliest Christianity.

In contrast to Wilson's thesis that Paul was the inventor of Christianity (a tired thesis indeed), Wright argues that Paul carried on Jesus' agenda of restoring Israel. Insofar as he argues continuity between Jesus and Paul rather than discontinuity, Wright is surely more correct than is Wilson. But that is not necessarily saying a great deal, for Wilson's book is not only wrong, it is also wrongheaded and muddled.

Wilson has written one of those old-fashioned British biographies in the Chesterbelloc tradition, which means in most part that the sweeping character of his claims is matched almost perfectly by his cavalier neglect of facts. He fails to deal critically with the sources, replaces careful analysis of historical context with gossip from ancient historians, and relies on casual psychological characterizations rather than a serious engagement with Paul's notoriously resistant Greek prose.

Wilson follows the popular biographer's path of least resistance, using the story line of Acts when it suits him, and amplifying it here and there with biographical snippets from the letters and random encyclopedia notes on the Roman world. Where the sources do not speak, Wilson has a ready store of speculation: he thinks Paul was among the temple guard that arrested Jesus, wonders about the apostle's sexual proclivities, and pictures him in happy and oblivious retirement on the Iberian coast. All this is dished out with a cheerful disregard for evidence.

In Wilson's account, Paul's mind is equally haphazard and untidy. Here, Paul picks up an influence from Judaism; there, he falls under the sway of Greek thought. Paul's mystical perception of Jesus is so regularly compared to the cult of Mithras that only the dullest reader would miss the intended inference: under the influence of the ancient mysteries, Paul has transformed the simple preaching of Jesus into the Christ Cult. But what is most remarkable about a book subti-

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tled "the mind of the apostle" is how little it actually deals with anything of Paul's process of thought as actually expressed in his letters.

Wilson despairs of making sense of Galatians: "No commentator can explain it because it does not on any rational level make sense," which leaves the way open to search for some "psychological truth [that] might lie behind Paul's incomprehensible words." Wilson refers repeatedly to the "restless and almost Nietzschean mind of Paul," to his "richly imaginative, but confused, religious genius," and calls him "the greatest poet of personal religion." Such effusions serve mainly, it seems, to excuse his failure to interpret Paul's actual words. He spends five pages, for example, extolling the importance of the letter to the Romans without offering even a summary of its argument.

IT WOULD BE PLEASANT to report that N. T. Wright is not only better than Wilson but the very model of a popular treatment of Paul. Despite its clear superiority to Wilson at every point, however, Wright's own contribution is also, in its own way, severely limited. No less than Wilson does Wright adopt a patronizing tone: readers are reminded frequently that their present state of knowledge is deficient in every way imaginable—perhaps this sort of thing works better in the lecture format in which this book began, but good popularization ought not to condescend quite as much as both these authors do.

Wright also tends to overwork one side of Paul's background to the neglect of other aspects of his complex symbolic world. He seems to know more about the hopes and dreams of Shammaite Pharisees—the sort he insists Paul was—than any of the sources available to us actually states. He also knows which verses of Scripture Paul had read before his conversion and what he had made of them, information all the more impressive since Paul himself never tells us these things.

Wright is obviously a lively lecturer whose strong suit is the construction of a clear story line. This is both the strength and weakness of his popularization. He can make the past vivid by rendering it in such dramatic fashion, but he can also oversimplify it to the point of distortion. Wright properly emphasizes Paul's Jewishness. But by reducing Judaism to only one stream, he also reduces, indeed effectively eliminates, those aspects of Judaism in Paul that resemble Philo more than Hillel or Gamaliel; that is, he suppresses the diaspora Jew in favor of the palestinian Jew.

Wright's preference for story affects his analysis in another way. He places Paul in continuity with Jesus by making them characters in the same basic narrative: they share the same fundamental vision for the restoration of Israel, with each playing a distinctive role. In effect, what Jesus sought for his fellow Jews, Paul saw as inaugurated in Jesus' death and resurrection, namely the effective rule of God in the world—beginning and culminating in Israel: "*When Paul announced the 'Gospel' to the Gentile world, therefore, he was deliberately and consciously implementing the achievement of Jesus*" (emphasis in original). Paul's mission to the Gentiles, therefore, was not a new initiative that betrayed Jesus' own, but was rather in service to the same vision, for the inclusion of the Gentiles was to be the eschatological realization of "all Israel being saved" (Romans 11:26).

This is a powerful rendering of a genuine element in Paul, and Wright manages to bring a good bit within this framework. He does a particularly good job leading the reader through several difficult Pauline passages critical to this reading (such as 1 Corinthians 15, Galatians 3-4, Philippians 2-3, and big patches of Romans). Wright is a learned scholar and a deft reader. When he sets to work on the text this way, the ineptitude and pretentiousness of Wilson is by comparison made all too clear .

THE BIGGEST CRITICISM of Wright's treatment attaches not to what he does in this book but what he appears to claim by his title, "What Saint Paul Really Said," as though this one aspect of Paul adequately covered one of the most complex and difficult writers imaginable. Wright fails adequately to inform his reader that there are dimensions of Paul—as moral teacher, for example, and as shaper of a community of character—that do not fit as neatly within his proposed narrative.

Most of all, his approach masks the peculiar specificity and resistance of each of Paul's letters. Wright makes it seem as if Paul was working out the logic of a single unitary vision rather than responding to multiple and particular problems in communities scattered across the Mediterranean world. Perhaps a better title would be "Some of What Paul Really Said," so that the reader would not draw the (surely false) inference that Wright is claiming to have captured the essence of Paul and made it available, in chapters dealing with a handful of passages in a handful of letters.

There also is a sense in which Wright's political reading of both Jesus and Paul has some troubling implications—at least for readers who think that Christianity's return to a diaspora existence has by and large

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been a good thing both for it and the world. He is surely correct when he states that Paul's vision of "salvation" is this-worldly, consisting in a people that "calls on the name of the Lord." And there is at least one sense in which one can agree with him when he states, "Paul believes that the renewed humanity is set (strangely and paradoxically) in authority over the world," for Paul himself says of the end time, "Do you not know that the saints will judge the world?" (1 Corinthians 6:2). But it is a much larger step to declare, as Wright does: "The mission of the church is the reality of which the pagan empire is the parody," and "There was only One God; this God had exalted his Son Jesus, as the true Lord of the world; his empire was the reality, Caesar's the parody." The portrayal of a palestinian and political Paul rather than a diasporic and community-building Paul is a simplification of evidence that is more complex than Wright acknowledges; the portrayal of Jesus' lordship in terms of a Christian empire is also a simplification, all the more unfortunate if consciously intended.

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BRIEFLY NOTED

ASPECTS OF THE CANADIAN EVANGELICAL MIND. Edited by G. A. RAWLYK. *McGill-Queen's University Press. 542 pp. $55.*

The twenty-eighth work in a series on religious history published by McGill-Queen's University Press, this book is a significant contribution to the increasingly lively study of evangelicalism in Canada. All but one of the twenty-six papers collected here were presented at a conference organized by the late George Rawlyk in 1995. With the exception of one chapter devoted in large measure to howling about the absence of women in Canadian historiography, this book is well worth reading. Robert Burkinshaw writes on Canada's Bible colleges, Ronald Kydd on Canadian Pentecostals, Bruce Guenther on the Mennonites. Kevin Kee, a graduate student with a knack for digging up interesting stories, relates the conversion experience of Sir John A. Macdonald, Canada's first prime minister. Mark Noll, Mark Hutchinson, and David Bebbington offer their views on Canadian evangelicalism from, respectively, American, Australian, and British perspectives. John G. Stackhouse, Jr. feistily challenges evangelicals who might think their influence in Canadian society is greater than it is. "For all the vaunted vitality attributed to evangelicalism in Canada in the last quarter of the twentieth century," he writes, "it is a vitality that seems privatized into a subculture with no discernible influence upon Canadian public life." Well, yes. But there are hopeful signs. Outspoken and intelligent Canadian evangelicals such as Gregory Bloomquist, Graeme Hunter, David Lyle Jeffrey, and John Patrick—all of the University of Ottawa—are becoming increasingly well known in Canada and are writing and speaking regularly in public forums. Canadians looking for an intellectually formidable Christian movement should keep an eye on this group.

— Preston Jones

SOUL IN SOCIETY: THE MAKING AND RENEWAL OF SOCIAL CHRISTIANITY. By GARY DORRIEN. *Fortress. 388 pp. $24.*

The author, an Episcopal priest and dean of Stetson Chapel at Kalamazoo College, Michigan, provides a comprehensive overview of "social Christianity" from the late nineteenth century to the present. His treatment of contemporary debates pays particular attention to Stanley Hauerwas and to the work of the neoconservatives, notably Michael Novak and Richard John Neuhaus. These are voices, Dorrien writes, "that liberal church leaders and theologians need to hear." Designed for use as a textbook, the book is clearly pitched to liberal Protestants in religious studies and seminary education, and its liberalism is defined by economic democracy. The author has read widely and carefully, and yet he seems strangely unaffected by what he has read. He knows that his liberal vision is under siege. The penultimate chapter on economic democracy is titled "Failure of a Dream?" Grasping at straws such as worker participation in Sweden and John B. Cobb's eco-theological attempt to construct a "third way" in economics, Dorrien answers his own question simply by re-

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asserting the once and future socialist dream. His clinging relentlessly to "social Christianity" has about it a note of desperation and denial, resulting in a book that seems caught in a time warp. Nonetheless, *Soul in Society*, especially in its historical chapters, is a useful introduction to a style of Protestant liberalism that once confidently believed itself to be on the cutting edge of history. Dorrien is keeping the faith, albeit not so confidently.

THE CHALLENGE OF PLURALISM: CHURCH AND STATE IN FIVE DEMOCRACIES. By STEPHEN V. MONSMA and J. CHRISTOPHER SOPER. *Rowman & Littlefield. 228 pp. $52.50 cloth, $21.95 paper.*

A useful comparative study of church and state in the U.S., Australia, England, Germany, and the Netherlands. This survey can help Americans appreciate the peculiarities, both good and bad, of our church-state arrangements. Among the authors' conclusions is that there is no necessary relationship between state aid in education and social services, on the one hand, and the integrity of religious institutions, on the other. Whether institutions remain vibrantly religious depends upon the vibrancy of the churches that run them.

THE HISTORY OF THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE: ETHNIC CONFLICT FROM THE BALKANS TO ANATOLIA TO THE CAUCASUS. By VAHAKN N. DADRIAN. *Berghan Books (Providence, RI). 452 pp. $39.95.*

A new edition of a book that relates the story that many have been eager to forget. The author, director of a genocide study program of the H. F. Guggenheim Foundation, provides a detailed narrative of the massacre of the Armenians by the Turks at the time of World War I, and a searing analysis of the failure of Western nations, humanitarian organizations, and international law to face up to the horror. While it is said that justice delayed is justice denied, Dadrian is hopeful that the Armenian genocide may still be rescued from the memory hole to which it is too often consigned. This disturbing book is an important step toward that end.

ECHOES OF A NATIVE LAND: TWO CENTURIES OF A RUSSIAN VILLAGE. By SERGE SCHMEMANN. *Knopf. 350 pp. $27.50.*

Long-time *New York Times* correspondent Schmemann goes back to the village of his rural gentry ancestors and provides an unblinking examination of the Soviet years, but also of the sordidness of peasant life under the Czars, which was comparable to the sordidness of today. He is especially effective in depicting the devastation of religion under the Soviets and its continuing consequences in a Russia that seems incapable of rediscovering its much-discussed soul. The author is the son of the distinguished Orthodox theologian, the late Alexander Schmemann.

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THE PUBLIC SQUARE

A Continuing Survey of Religion and Public Life

Richard John Neuhaus

Islamic Encounters

"Venomous diatribe." "Hateful xenophobia." "Doing the work of Adolf Hitler." "Agitating for a new crusade." "Obviously mentally ill." Such were among the sentiments expressed in response to my review in the October 1997 issue of Bat Ye'or's important new book recently published in this country, *The Decline of Eastern Christianity Under Islam: From Jihad to Dhimmitude* (Fairleigh Dickinson University Press). In my comment I indicated the difficulties in establishing a respectful dialogue with contemporary Islam, but it really need not be *this* difficult.

To be fair, the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) should not be taken to represent contemporary Islam. The attack initiated by CAIR produced dozens and dozens of letters from as far away as Australia, some of them accompanied by hundreds of signatures of Muslims who claimed to be deeply offended by the review. The campaign stopped short of issuing a *fatwa* against the editors, although there was a little nervous joking around here about who would get to open the mail. The campaign obviously had the aim of intimidating into silence anyone who dares to say anything less than complimentary about things Muslim. Just as obviously, such an effort is entirely counterproductive.

Many of the protesters made a point of saying that they were converts to Islam, usually from Christianity, and some had most uncomplimentary things to say about the religion they had left. The spokesman for CAIR stressed, in several telephone conversations, that he is an American-born convert and resents my "instructing" him on how we conduct civil conversation in this country. For all I know his family came over on the *Mayflower*, but the fact remains that issuing press releases and flooding the internet with condemnations of those with whom one disagrees is not the best way to nurture a constructive dialogue.

The first press release called on the Catholic Church to investigate, disown, and otherwise do something about this renegade priest who had written not nice things about Islam. Amazingly enough, the monsignor who is general secretary of the bishops conference responded to CAIR by distancing the conference from the review in FT and offering assurances of the bishops' exquisite sensitivity and eagerness for dialogue. Quite predictably, CAIR seized upon his letter as the occasion for another press release trumpeting that the bishops of the United States had repudiated my review of Bat Ye'or, which no doubt came as a surprise to the bishops. As it happens, several bishops had indicated to me their appreciation of the review, and my own bishop, Cardinal O'Connor, was entirely supportive. Nonetheless, the letter from the conference secretary created a little flap in the Catholic press. It's not every day that the office of the bishops conference issues a review of a book review or, however inadvertently, makes itself party to an attack on a priest who has editorially displeased a bullying interest group. Of course I am assured that that is not what was intended, but it is a curious little episode that should not be entirely forgotten.

As the Bat Ye'or book underscores, there are very important questions to be engaged in the complicated relationship between Christians, Jews, and Muslims, and I will return to them in due course. Meanwhile, one hopes that everyone will learn from this incident a little something about what is not helpful. For instance, Imam Michael G. Kilpatrick, national president of the Islamic Patrolmen's Benevolent Association, announces his group's support for the CAIR initiative: "We call upon people of the Catholic religion and people of conscience worldwide to condemn Mr. Neuhaus for his extremist attitude toward the religion of Islam and Muslims here in the United States." Strong stuff, that. It is manifest that most of the protesters had not read the item in question, having simply reacted to the alert sent out on the internet (more than half the protests were e-mailed), and quite a few are confused about who wrote the offending article. Some

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demanded that "Mr. Neuhaus" editorially condemn the author and never let any such thing appear in FT again.

"Beware and be Forewarned . . . "

Almost all deplored my woeful ignorance of Islam, on which I readily admit I am no expert, and many charged Bat Ye'or, a distinguished scholar, of not knowing what she was talking about. "The fact that she says she is opposed to Muslim-bashing shows that that is what she is doing," one writer insists. It is hard to get an acquittal under such rules. Various parties contributed to my education by sending stacks of books and pamphlets on Islam, and one suggested that I visit a website devoted to educating Americans on Islam, which I did. There I found a discussion of terrorism in which I learned that those who "set themselves up as enemies of God and the Muslims . . . are themselves at least mild terrorists." "If they do so then Muslims have a duty to oppose this force—with force if necessary and if it will be effective and decisive. In this way only those who are themselves 'terrorists' have cause to fear the use of force by Muslims." That was not terribly reassuring.

Mark Bober writes, noting that his Muslim name is Umar Hussam Al Deen and describing himself as "a white American Muslim and former member of the 'Catholic' Church." "I assure you that you are not dealing with the poor folk duped into trinitarianism every other Sunday. Now beware and be forewarned that Islam is on the rise in America as well as around the world." This was typical of many warnings that there is big trouble ahead if we non-Muslims don't watch our step. Ayman Sokkarie of the Islamic Center of South Florida declares, "Let me tell Mr. Neuhaus that Islam will be re-established whether he feared that or not and the world will see how just Islam is and how false all other ideologies are. It is just a matter of time."

Most of the writers expressed particular outrage that I had written that there are probably about two million Muslims in the U.S., half of them being American-born blacks. "Everybody knows," I was instructed, that there are eight million, and one writer asserted that it is "well documented" that there are twelve million. Needless to say, no documentation was supplied. In their 1993 book, *One Nation Under God: Religion in Contemporary American Society*, based on the largest survey of religious self-identification ever conducted, Barry Kosmin and Seymour Lachman reported that there were 1.5 million Muslims, half being American-born blacks. (They discovered that many people with "Muslim sounding" names turned out to be Christians who had fled the Middle East.) Taking subsequent Muslim immigration into account, my guesstimate was "about two million." Quite possibly there are considerably more. Nobody knows, and the U.S. census does not ask about religion. A reporter at a national newspaper tells me, "We usually say four to six million, which has the merit of warding off protests from Muslim groups. But nobody really knows." The majority of protests received here claim that Islam is the fastest growing religion both in the U.S. and the world, a claim that is very doubtful on both scores. But I am impressed by how important this "triumphalist" reading of history is to many Muslims.

In the review I alluded in passing to the significance of this discussion for politics in the Middle East. For the protesters, this factor is of much more than passing importance. A petition of protest from the Islamic Center of Long Island includes more than three hundred signatures and declares, "It is obvious that such anti-Muslim writers [Bat Ye'or and Neuhaus] want to poison the relations between Muslims and Christians in America and the world for their racist political agenda in Palestine." The echo of the infamous UN resolution on Zionism as racism is, to put it gently, troubling. The reactions to FT are divided between those who present Islam in America as nothing more problematic than another participant in the gorgeous mosaic of American religion and those who present it as a world-conquering force arrayed against everyone else, especially against Jews and their Christian dupes.

For some, Islam is the historic champion of liberal tolerance. One almost expected those letters to be signed by John Stuart Muhammad Mill. For instance, "Islam completely did away with slavery and treated all human beings as equal, despite their race, color, creed, or origin, and treated everybody the same, with respect and brotherhood, from the very beginning, i.e., the seventh century, whereas the West could not do so till the nineteenth century." The key role of Muslims in the African slave trade over the centuries and slavery today in places such as Sudan are conveniently overlooked, as of course is the entire history of "dhimmitude" so carefully documented by Bat Ye'or and others. One may sympathetically try to understand the reasons for such defensive denials of the undeniable, but it does not help the discussion of these matters.

Against Self-Deception

A few protests acknowledge that some Muslims have at times done some bad things, but then quickly add that that has nothing to do with Islam. This, too, is understandable. Some Christians have done horrible things over the centuries, and we Christians insist that Christianity should not be judged by what they did—or by what some still do. The facial symmetry between Islam and Christianity in this regard does not bear close examination, however. Contra secularist claims, the liberal democratic tradition is in largest part the product of Christianity, especially the Christian imperative of self-criticism

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and openness to the other. It is no accident, as our Marxist friends used to say, that liberal democracy and constitutional government arose in cultures that understood themselves to be Christian. To date, there have not been similar developments in Islamic societies. This does not mean that Islam is necessarily incompatible with liberal democracy, although some who protested what I wrote do not disguise their contempt for democracy and other alleged diseases of what they view (with some justification) as the decadent West.

These are excruciatingly difficult questions. We cannot allow our consideration of Islam to be dominated by much that is today done in the name of Islam. At the same time, we deceive ourselves and do not help anyone if we join those Muslims who excuse or deny what is done. An editorial in *Strategic Review* of Fall 1997 notes that, of the almost one billion Muslims in the world, there is a radically politicized faction, and in that faction there are those who are prepared to sacrifice their lives by suicide in waging what they believe to be a war of the children of light against the children of darkness.

"Where the United States is concerned, the cost has already been unacceptably high. The suicide bombing of the Beirut-American headquarters in October of 1993—241 U.S. servicemen killed; Pan American Flight #103 at Lockerbie, Scotland, where 250 were killed; the Khobar Towers residence at Dharan in Saudi Arabia—19 Americans killed and 118 wounded; the World Trade Center in New York, where 19 were killed and 500 injured. And now, by sheer good luck, a frightened Middle Easterner led the New York police to two suicide bombers, complete with five bombs. One was killed while attempting to detonate his bomb. Their aim was to attack the busiest subway junction in New York City. It is plain that the terrorism crescendo is growing. It has reached the United States and we are doing too little to control it."

Of course it is necessary to guard against alarmism, but it would be foolish to deny the legitimate concern about Islamic terrorism (meaning terrorism committed by Muslims and claiming to be inspired by Islam) both here and elsewhere in the world. At this point a discussion that is already dicey gets dicier. The executive director of CAIR, Mr. Nihad Awad, writes me: "In view of Mr. Emerson's past history of false and defamatory attacks on the American Muslim community and on CAIR, we would consider the irresponsible repetition of his unsupported charges as evidence of 'actual malice' on your part. Similarly unsubstantiated charges from other sources, published with reckless disregard for the truth, would be regarded in the same light."

A Matter of Credibility

I expect the lawyers would tell me that CAIR is threatening to sue if I mention charges by Mr. Emerson and others. Since I may have already crossed the line by quoting Mr. Awad's letter, I might as well go ahead—with utmost responsibility and careful regard for the truth, and certainly without malice. Steven Emerson has written in the *Wall Street Journal* and elsewhere about the entanglement of Muslim groups in this country with terrorist groups, such as Hamas, in the Middle East. I have read with care a packet of materials sent by CAIR, attacking Emerson and others who allege that CAIR is, at least indirectly, supportive of terrorist activities. I have also read with care the charges against CAIR. Satisfactorily sorting out all the details would require that I devote the rest of my life to the study of Middle East politics and the connection with certain Muslim groups in the U.S., and even then I would surely not get to the bottom of things. My best judgment is that the critics of CAIR are credible and that CAIR is less than candid about its connections with the politics of the Middle East. Confidence in CAIR is not enhanced by its hamfisted efforts to intimidate and silence its critics.

Turning from CAIR itself to the criticisms generated by its campaign, one is struck by the importance of the Jewish factor. In some instances, this is chiefly a matter of animus toward Israel. Others, however, give expression to a poignant desire for Muslims in this country to be recognized, along with Christians and Jews, as full partners in America's religious triumvirate. This, too, is perfectly understandable. Some were upset by my reference to the Judeo-Christian tradition, and many were outraged by my speaking of "the delusion that a Muslim-Christian dialogue can be constructed on a basis more or less equivalent to the Jewish-Christian dialogue of recent decades." In fact, it is pointed out, Muslims have in several parts of the country joined local Jewish-Christian dialogues, and everyone gets along very nicely. I do not doubt it.

There are dialogues and then there are dialogues. Some Jewish-Christian dialogues are exercises in niceness, pretending that differences make little or no difference. To such dialogues Muslims, or for that matter almost anyone else, can be invited without difficulty. Then there is dialogue that is in service to the truth, and the truth is that Islam is not to Christianity what Judaism is to Christianity. For starters, Islam is not, as Judaism is, an integral part of the Christian understanding of the story of salvation. In view of the attention given in these pages to Jewish-Christian relations, I assume readers can readily come up with other differences that make a big difference. Does this mean there should not or cannot be Muslim-Christian dialogue? The answer is emphatically in the negative. Such dialogue becomes increasingly

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imperative, and we must hope it will become increasingly possible with Muslims who recognize the wrongheadedness of reactions such as that orchestrated by CAIR.

An Opening Comment

Among the numerous responses to the internet alert is a letter by AbdulraHman Lomax, an American convert to Islam in Sonoma, California, and addressed to other Muslims. "Scholarly and respectful replies to the article [in FT] would be helpful. Hostile or disrespectful comments would be counterproductive and harmful to the image of the Muslim community." After responding to specific assertions in the article, Mr. Lomax notes my statement that "I am convinced we must do everything we can to nurture constructive relations with Islam" and he writes, "We are obligated to take Neuhaus at his word. Perhaps we can take his article as an opening comment in a dialog which will ultimately clear the air. Before they can develop a deep communication, friends sometimes must air the grievances and fears that have been kept hidden, and, in the light of open conversation, these can be relieved." The people at CAIR forwarded his letter. One wishes they had followed his counsel.

Not long ago, Prof. David F. Forte of Cleveland-Marshall College of Law testified before a congressional committee on Islam and human rights. The subject was what some call Islamic fundamentalism (an unhappy term that imposes an American Protestant experience on Islam), what others call Islamism (a term mainly limited to scholars), and what yet others refer to simply as radical Islam (which, it is objected, is radically un-Islamic). It is the Islam of terror and despotism, and, whatever it is called, Forte says it is a heresy. "It has gained the reins of power in Iran and the Sudan. It threatens Algeria, Bangladesh, Egypt, even Saudi Arabia. It cows a timid government in Pakistan to accede to its program. It persecutes minorities, particularly Christians. But its real objective is to steal the soul of Islam, to change that great religion's tradition of art, culture, learning, and toleration into its own image of rigid and tyrannical power."

It is for Muslims to protect "the soul of Islam." We can help by not equating Islam with the evil done in the name of Islam, while, at the same time, not letting an "ideal" Islam obscure the Islam of historical and contemporary fact. We can help by recognizing the diversity within Islam and the claims made for its more humane social expression in places such as Indonesia, while not forgetting that country's massacre of Christians in Timor, and not forgetting the politics of Islam in the lands mentioned by Prof. Forte. We can help by reaching out to Muslims here in America, in the hope of engaging within the bonds of civility our commonalities and differences, always, as St. Paul says, speaking the truth in love. And we can help by informing ourselves through the reading of books such as Bat Ye'or's *The Decline of Eastern Christianity Under Islam: From Jihad to Dhimmitude.*

FT

Always Our Confusions

To be fair, there is not always confusion about statements issuing from the National Conference of Catholic Bishops (NCCB), but confusion is remarkably frequent. The latest instance is a pastoral letter approved by the administrative committee of the conference, *Always Our Children: A Pastoral Message to Parents of Homosexual Children and Suggestions for Pastoral Ministries.* It is in many ways a very thoughtful and clearly compassionate effort to help parents in a most difficult circumstance. But it has also generated intense controversy, and not without reason.

Father John Harvey is the heroic founder of "Courage," a national organization of Catholics who are homosexual in orientation but are striving to live a chaste life in accord with the teaching of the Church. He has issued a statement sharply critical of *Always Our Children,* pointing out, inter alia, that it distorts the teaching of the Church, downplays the importance of therapeutic help for homosexuals, and offers dangerous advice. On the last score, he cites the document's counsel to parents that they adopt a "wait and see" attitude if their child is experimenting with homosexuality. "Isolated acts do not make someone homosexual," says *Always Our Children.*

Fr. Harvey writes: "This 'wait and see' attitude is very dangerous. If someone is attracted to drugs or to alcohol, we do not accept that attraction as a given, or indicate that it is beyond their power to reject. The truth is that we are dealing with an objective disorder within the person. The parent should do everything possible to help the youth to move away from this particular attraction, and from the surroundings which encourage him to act out. If pastors are going to advise parents concerning homosexuality, they should remind parents that their first obligation is to protect the child from immoral and dangerous behavior."

Before the full meeting of bishops in November, and in response to the criticism by Fr. Harvey and others, Bishop Thomas J. O'Brien, chairman of the NCCB Committee on Marriage and Family that produced the statement, circulated a letter to the bishops defending *Always Our Children.* The letter

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says that the committee "respects Fr. Harvey's work in pastoral ministry to homosexuals and consulted him during the course of writing [the document]." It appears that the committee did speak with Fr. Harvey for about twenty minutes two years ago. Who else the committee consulted is not a matter of public record, but reliable sources report that the process involved a number of parties closely associated with homosexual advocacy and critical of the Church's teaching.

A very serious objection is that *AOC* twists the teaching of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* in its treatment of sexuality as "a gift of God." The Catechism says, "Everyone, man and woman, should acknowledge and accept his sexual identity. Physical, moral, and spiritual difference and complementarity are oriented toward the goods of marriage and the flourishing of family life" (2333). In *AOC* that passage is quoted with a crucial elision: "Everyone . . . should acknowledge and accept his sexual identity." Bishop O'Brien says this was not intended to urge an acceptance of homosexual orientation. The difficulty is, however, that the crippled quote from the Catechism appears in the context of discussing homosexuality. The quote is immediately followed by this: "Like all gifts from God, the power and freedom of sexuality can be channeled toward good or evil. Everyone—the homosexual and the heterosexual person—is called to personal maturity and responsibility." It is very hard to imagine that an unbiased reader of *AOC* would *not* conclude that it is the Church's teaching that the homosexual person "should acknowledge and accept his sexual identity."

The very next lines in *AOC* propose what some might view as a novel understanding of chastity: "Chastity means integrating one's thoughts, feelings, and actions, in the area of human sexuality, in a way that values and respects one's own dignity and that of others." By that measure, homogenitally active same-sex relationships that are, as it is said, meaningful and loving would appear also to be chaste. To be sure, the document does say that it adheres to Catholic moral doctrine. What some think is a problem is that it does not explain the connection between that claim and statements that would seem to be at variance with Catholic teaching, such as the new way of defining chastity.

As to the controversial "wait and see" passage, Bishop O'Brien writes: "References to early experimentation between a child and another of one's own sex are primarily to psychological and emotional dependencies. They are not references to being sexually active." This is intended to be reassuring, but it may also be exegetically puzzling to those who actually read the "wait and see" passage. It reads this way: "If your son or daughter is an adolescent, it is possible that he or she may be experimenting with some homosexual behaviors as part of the process of coming to terms with sexual identity. Isolated acts do not make someone homosexual." With all respect to Bishop O'Brien, the words would seem to have reference to "being sexually active."

News reports and commentaries on *AOC*, often approving, suggested that the Church was changing its position on homosexuality. The document is strongly supported by New Ways Ministry, an organization advocating such change. This from a memo widely circulated by its executive director, Francis DeBernardo: "The pastoral letter *Always Our Children* needs your help! This document is one of the strongest calls by Catholic leaders for inclusion and acceptance of lesbian and gay people in our Church. Yet, critics are voicing their opposition and calling for its revision and retraction." The memo urges letters to the NCCB and individual bishops: "Tell him what the letter means to you: any personal story or reactions you or your loved ones had to the news of the letter. Write as who you are: a gay or lesbian person, a parent, a pastoral minister, a counselor, a youth worker, a chaplain—whatever your role is."

It seems possible that bishops, too, like to be praised, and some, speaking in defense of *AOC*, have reported with pleasure that their mail has been nine to one in favor of the document. The word "gospel" does mean good news, which can too easily be confused with telling people what they want to hear. Especially people who are well organized, very vocal, and ever so progressive. It is fair to say that, in general, bishops do not receive all that many plaudits from the self-certified specialists in caring, compassion, and progressive thought. In addition, personal stories can be very affecting, and there is today prominent precedent for a nonjudgmental leadership style keyed to feeling the pain of others.

Nonetheless, one may be permitted to wonder whether such factors should have much bearing on the responsibility of bishops to articulate clearly the Church's teaching and the pastoral tasks entailed by that teaching. There is beyond doubt much to approve in *AOC*. The appeal that parents should always love and never reject their children is movingly stated, even if relatively few parents need to be persuaded of that. It seems all too likely, however, that confusions in the document will mislead many parents and will discourage Catholics who struggle to be faithful to what they were taught, praying for the grace to resist temptation and overcome their homosexual desires. The alternative—an alternative that many call liberation—is to surrender to temptation and affirm one's homosexual "identity." New Ways Ministry is understandably enthusiastic about *AOC*. Equally understandable is the fervent hope of others that it will be revised or withdrawn.

FT

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A Selective Darwinian

Here's an item that almost fell through the cracks, but is very much worth rescuing. Roger Kimball of the *New Criterion* discovers David Stove, and hopes that many others will as well. Stove, who has taught at the University of Sydney, Australia, most of his life, wrote *Popper and After: Four Modern Irrationalists* and a book on Darwinian theory that both admires and debunks Darwin. Stove's approach is quite different from that of many who write on these subjects. Let Roger Kimball take it from here:

"Stove's demolition of certain aspects of Darwinian theory, in *Darwinian Fairytales* and related essays, is equally thorough and convincing. Stove is unusual among anti-Darwinians. He is not a creationist; indeed, as he points out, he is 'of no religion.' Moreover, he admires Darwin greatly as a thinker, placing him at the top of his personal pantheon, along with Shakespeare, Purcell, Newton, and Hume. Finally, Stove believes that it is 'overwhelmingly probable' that our species evolved from some other and that 'natural selection is probably the cause which is principally responsible for the coming into existence of new species from old ones.' At the same time, Stove maintains that 'Darwinism says many things, especially about our species, which are too obviously false to be believed by an educated person; or at least by an educated person who retains any capacity at all for critical thought.' Some examples: that 'every single organic being around us may be said to be striving to the utmost to increase its numbers'; that 'of the many individuals of any species which are periodically born, but a small number can survive'; that it is to a mother's 'advantage' that her child should be adopted by another woman; that 'no one is prepared to sacrifice his life for any single person, but . . . everyone will sacrifice it for more than two brothers, or four half-brothers or eight first cousins'; that 'any variation in the least degree injurious [to a species] would be rigidly destroyed.'

"These quotations are from Darwin and his orthodox disciples. A moment's reflection shows that none is even remotely true, at least of human beings. Take the last named: that anything in the least injurious to a species would be 'rigidly destroyed' by natural selection. What about abortion, adoption, fondness for alcohol, and altruism, just to start with the A's? As Stove notes, 'each of these characteristics [tends] to shorten our lives, or to lessen the number of children we have, or both.' Are any on the way to being rigidly destroyed? Again, if Darwin's theory of evolution were true, 'there would be in every species a constant and ruthless competition to survive: a competition in which only a few in any generation can be winners. But it is perfectly obvious that human life is not like that, however it may be with other species.' Priests, hospitals, governments, old-age homes, charities, police: these are a few of the things whose existence contradicts Darwin's theories.

"Stove shows in unremitting detail that, despite its enormous explanatory power regarding 'cods, pines, flies,' etc., Darwin's theory of evolution is 'a ridiculous slander on human beings.' He is particularly good at exposing the 'amazingly arrogant habit of Darwinians' of '*blaming the fact, instead of blaming their theory*' when they encounter contrary biological facts. Does it regularly happen that increasing prosperity leads to lower birth rates? And does this directly contradict Darwinian theory? No problem, just announce that the birth rates in such cases are somehow 'inverted.' Indeed, Stove's analysis shows that, when it comes to our species, Darwinism 'is a mere festering mass of errors.' It can tell you 'lots of truths about plants, flies, fish, etc., and interesting truths, too. . . . [But] if it is *human* life that you would most like to know about and to understand, then a good library can be begun by leaving out Darwinism, from 1859 [when *On the Origin of Species* was published] to the present hour.' It is not a pretty picture that Stove paints; but then the exhibition of gross error widely accepted is never a comely sight."

FT

More Than Mere Coincidence

A Lutheran pastor writes me that he has been wrestling again with Dietrich Bonhoeffer, that most worthy theologian who was martyred during the last days of the Nazi horror. Pondering Bonhoeffer's *Life Together*, he says, "I almost feel I am in the world of the Church fathers. The mix of the perennial and the contextual is striking. Reading through the umpteenth time, I am especially struck with Bonhoeffer's bracing severity about 'community'—a kind of ascesis of spiritual relationships."

This pastor, like so many others these days, is heavily burdened by the question of where he belongs in the larger Christian community. "I've been thinking sobering thoughts about how the unraveling of Lutheranism may have been quite predictable, given the conceptual habit of relegating morals to a 'second order' somehow incidental to salvation. . . . Doctrinal agreement turns out to be sheer abstraction apart from a common vision about the concrete shape of the Life we are saved to live. It's revealing that in 'Evangelicals and Catholics

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Together' you were able to begin with actual issues of Christian obedience."

I had not thought of it quite like that, but of course he is right. To be sure, there is an important sense in which the 1997 statement, "The Gift of Salvation," is more significant than the original ECT statement of 1994. "The Gift of Salvation" does not say everything that Catholics, and many Protestants, would want to say about salvation, but it does put clearly and unmistakably on the record that Catholics can say with full integrity what evangelical Protestants believe must be said about salvation.

At the same time, however, my Lutheran friend is right about the significance of the 1994 statement's underscoring of how Christians are to live, how they understand their duties to one another and to the world of which they are part. In the very early Church, before Christianity was called Christianity it was called, quite simply, the Way. It was the communal way of living for those who followed the one who called himself the way, the truth, and the life. This is not to downplay the importance of doctrine. Doctrine or teaching is necessarily engaged in answering the question why one should follow Jesus the Christ. Who is he that I should acknowledge his claim on my life? The answers to this and other questions are inescapably doctrinal.

But a moment's reflection on these things quickly runs into ironies. The old liberalism that claims it is "deeds not creeds" that matter has again and again demonstrated that it can speak clearly about neither deeds nor creeds. My Lutheran friend is pleased that Catholics and Lutherans can approve a common statement on justification by faith, but "doctrinal agreement turns out to be sheer abstraction apart from a concrete vision of the shape of the Life we are saved to live." I am reminded again of the emphatic way in which the encyclical *Veritatis Splendor* argues that moral theology *is theology*. The Christian faith is a way of thinking and speaking together, but it is equally a way of living together, and living is much more than thinking and speaking. Creeds without deeds are abstractions, while the moral imperative of deeds loses all its force without creeds. What we are to do and how we are to be (deeds) cannot be sustained apart from an answer to the question why (creeds).

Perhaps there was, then, more than mere coincidence in ECT's beginning with what my friend calls "actual issues of Christian obedience." There is a sense in which we found ourselves in the Way before we addressed in detail the heart of the why. All of us involved in ECT have repeatedly spoken of our strong sense of the Spirit's guidance in this initiative. The French have a saying: "Coincidence is an event in which God wishes to remain anonymous."

FT

YOUNG, JEWISH, AND CONSERVATIVE

"Scratch an American Jew," writes Earl Raab, one of the most respected analysts of American Jewish life, "and you find a democratic voter, but, if you scratch deeper, you will not find a liberal." That is quoted in an article by Murray Friedman of the American Jewish Committee in *Moment* magazine. Friedman thinks a major change may be under way, citing the large number of younger Jewish intellectuals and writers who identify themselves as conservative. Some of those he cites are closely associated with this journal. "There are indications that younger Jews are voting differently from their parents and especially from their grandparents. It's a 'generation that knows not FDR or JFK; it is three generations removed from the ferment of the Jewish labor union movement. For this generation, even the civil rights and student anti-Vietnam movements of the 1960s coincide with their birth and infancy but not with their political experience,' writes political scientist Alan Fisher."

There is another generational difference of potentially great consequence: "Unlike their elders, who fought the bitter and wounding battles of the Cold War, this younger generation seems less intense. And religion is often more important in their personal lives. For their elders, Judaism was seen as preventing intermarriage and 'good' for maintaining order and decent values rather than as a force that shaped their lives. Irving Kristol told an interviewer that he did not join a synagogue until the '80s. In contrast, most of the younger Jewish intellectuals are either traditional or Orthodox Jews. Many are active in their synagogues and attend services regularly." Old worries, however, have by no means been dissipated: "Having said this, I must also acknowledge that the emergence of a full-bodied Jewish conservatism faces serious obstacles. The term itself turns off most Jews. It connotes a body of reactionary and bigoted ideas. Despite greater affluence and broader acceptance, Jews remain anxious. Recent surveys show that while most Americans feel that anti-Semitism has declined, Jews are convinced it is very much alive and rising."

Despite the best efforts of people such as Ralph Reed, Jewish fears of "the religious right" remain powerful. Not so, however, with the Jews who will likely be a larger part of the American Jewish future. "And the proportion of Orthodox Jewish voters will grow because of their high birthrate. Their political activism has already been felt. At the close of the '80s, Agudath Israel opened an office in Washington, D.C., where once Reform's Social Action Center and secular Jewish agencies had this turf to themselves. On issues like tuition vouchers for families to send

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their children to private and parochial schools, Orthodox Jews have effectively allied themselves with Catholic and Evangelical Christian conservatives and have gained the support of senators like Joseph Lieberman (D-Conn.), who is an Orthodox Jew, and Daniel Patrick Moynihan (D-N.Y.)." Friedman notes Irving Kristol's observation that "In America all successful politics is the politics of hope," and ends on a guardedly hopeful note that the younger generation of conservative—or at least more conservative—Jews has learned that lesson.

FT

Standing in the Schoolhouse Door

The student rebellion redux, but this time opinion leaders are not applauding. It's happening in Alabama, after all, and this time the students are demanding the right to—would you believe it?—*pray*. They aren't yet at the point of taking over administration buildings, but hundreds of them are walking out of classrooms and holding rallies in protest against a ruling by federal judge Ira DeMent.

The judge issued a detailed injunction that prohibits the governor, the attorney general, the state board of education, and everyone else from permitting religious activity in classrooms, including vocal prayer, readings of the Bible, devotional discussions, and distribution of religious materials. It also bans publicly broadcast prayers and invocations at commencement exercises, assemblies, and sporting events. In addition, the ruling appoints monitors to patrol the schools in search of violations. Imagine a report to the authorities: "This monitor did see four students in Room 203 in discussion and did hear the word 'God' spoken four times in a tone suspiciously devotional. Moreover, one student read from what appeared to be a New Testament she was carrying on her person."

It should be obvious to all that Judge DeMent's order is doing precisely what the federal government is constitutionally forbidden to do, namely, interfering with the free exercise of religion. "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof." Nor shall the federal courts, or so it was thought until *Everson* (1947) and its judicial progeny. In addition, as parents and others in authority should know, there's nothing better to spark youthful enthusiasm for something than to forbid it.

The country has been heading toward a DeMent-like showdown for years. Something has to give. The courts, led by the Supreme Court, may relax their entrenched hostility to religion. Or the open defiance of court orders may become more commonplace. Or, as is already happening, many more parents may decide that the only way they can get an acceptable education for their children is outside the government school system.

There is nice irony in the showdown coming in Alabama. Governor Fob James, Jr. says he will defy the order from the federal court. Pamela L. Summers, the ACLU lawyer defending the prohibition of religion, says, "For the governor of a state to do this is exactly like George Wallace standing in the schoolhouse door." Well, not exactly. There is no doubt a formal similarity, but the substantive difference from the Wallace confrontation is that racial segregation had been declared unconstitutional and was deemed an evil by most Americans. That is not the case with religion. Not yet, and not, I think, in any foreseeable future. It may be the fate of Judge DeMent to go down in history as the fellow who pushed a fatal step too far an interpretation of church-state law that is, if you will permit me, truly demented.

FT

While We're At It

■ After three months of cruel interrogation and torture of approximately seven hundred people arrested in connection with the July 20, 1944 plot on Hitler's life, the Gestapo concluded in its final report: "The entire inner alienation from the ideas of National Socialism which characterized the men of the reactionary conspiratorial circle expresses itself above all in their position on the Jewish question. They stubbornly take the liberal position of granting to the Jews in principle the same status as to every German." That is from an essay by Peter Hoffman, professor of history at McGill University, in a new book, *Hyping the Holocaust: Scholars Answer Goldhagen*. Daniel Goldhagen, it will be remembered, slandered all Germans, including resisters who rescued Jews, as anti-Semites in his book *Hitler's Willing Executioners* (see "Daniel Goldhagen's Holocaust," FT, August/September 1996). *Hyping the Holocaust* is edited by Franklin Littell, president of the Center on the Holocaust, Genocide, and Human Rights in Philadelphia and one of the early pioneers of Jewish-Christian dialogue. The contributors to the book are Jewish and Christian, American and European. What they

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have in common is a sense of outrage at Goldhagen's arrogance, self-righteousness, and exploitation of popular stereotypes. Against Goldhagen, Littell wants to defend "senior scholars" who have spent decades pressing the case for serious research of the Holocaust "long before any young writer or eager publisher could capitalize on the brute fact that today 'there's no business like Shoah business.'" That's blunt, but not without reason. (*Hyping the Holocaust* is available at $20 + $3 postage [checks only] from Center on the Holocaust, P.O. Box 10, Merion Station, PA 19066.)

■ Let us now, following the counsel of Ecclesiasticus, praise famous men, or at least praise one another. The *Tablet* of London has a laudatory story on a new booklet praising the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND), an organization that, beginning with brilliantly wrongheaded Bertrand Russell, agitated on the wrong side of practically every question of consequence during the Cold War. After celebrating the putative heroes and heroines of CND, the story gets to Bruce Kent, "who, forced to choose between the Catholic priesthood and his peace work, chose the latter. Later he married the booklet's author, Valerie Flessati." That closes the circle rather neatly.

■ The mills grind slowly, but they grind. For more than twenty years now, some of us have been writing about the apparent free fall of mainline/oldline Protestantism. Sociological studies of the phenomenon can be stacked higher than the steeples of largely abandoned churches. But the problem, I persist in believing, is theological. Churches that have nothing definite to say about revealed truth as it informs holiness of life and hope eternal, that offer no indispensable means to both, are churches that can give no convincing reason for their existence and have no claim upon the attention of the culture. So where within those liberal worlds is there evidence that the mills of reform are beginning to grind? There are many answers to that question, but the occasion of this little note is a new series of books, "The Abingdon Press Studies in Christian Ethics and Economic Life." Max Stackhouse of Princeton Theological Seminary is the general editor and three volumes are already out. *Christian Social Ethics in a Global Era, Environmental Ethics and Christian Humanism,* and *The Business Corporation and Productive Justice.* Admittedly, social ethics is not the most important dimension of Christian theology, but the argument can be made that it was with social ethics that the oldline went so wrong several decades ago, and it may be the point, or at least a point, at which the correction can begin. In any event, Prof. Stackhouse and his colleagues are attempting to turn the oldline toward a more biblical and self-critical understanding of what it means to be Christian in the world, and you may want to find out more about the series by writing to Abingdon Press, 201 Eighth Avenue South, Nashville, TN 37203.

■ "The natural progress of things," warned Thomas Jefferson, "is for government to gain ground and for liberty to yield." That is very much what is happening with church and other voluntary agencies that get in bed with the government, according to Joe Loconte in *Seducing the Samaritans: How Government Contracts Are Reshaping Social Services.* Foreword by Peter Berger. For more information on this important 140-page study, write the Pioneer Institute, 85 Devonshire St., Boston, MA 02109.

■ Michael Ignatieff is thinking about martyrs, and he observes that the "incorrigibly bourgeois character of modern moral evaluations" has little place for them. "We have turned tame values into a synonym for values *tout court.* So to us the martyrs' willingness to sacrifice hearth and home to the demand of truth looks like pathological selfishness." Jesus' words about hating father, mother, wife, and children in order to be his disciple are a distinct embarrassment, he says. The occasion for his reflection is a book by Lacey Baldwin Smith, *Fools, Martyrs, Traitors: The Story of Martyrdom in the Western World* (Knopf). Baldwin tends to think that the martyrs are mainly pathological, with the notable exceptions of the more "ironic" among them, such as Thomas More and Gandhi. Ignatieff notes that Gandhi's threats to fast to the death were chiefly effective because of a British Raj that was uncertain of its own moral ground. Martyrs such as Dietrich Bonhoeffer, he notes, had no moral leverage with the truly ruthless regimes of the modern world. His final reflection is very much worth pondering: "If truth has become relative, if family values have triumphed, and if the modern state has become too cunning and too ruthless to allow martyrs to trouble its hegemony, the end of the martyr tradition in our culture may be at hand. And yet such a conclusion seems both premature and pessimistic. Smith's account may have been intended to strip away the haloes around our martyrs' heads, but the effect is simply to make them more human. And since they seem more human, the tradition that they represent seems less like an austere and impossible exercise in fanaticism and more like something the rest of us could admire and, if we had to, emulate. The noble few who value their lives so little continue to inspire the rest of us, even when they make us suspect that we may value our own lives too much."

■ Among the more massive betrayals of trust in American life is the long and doleful history of legacies used for purposes at war with the reasons they were originally given. One need mention only Ivy League universities and philanthropies such as

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the Ford Foundation. The years immediately ahead will, we are told, witness the greatest intergenerational transfer of wealth in the history of the world as people who made big money in the 1980s and 1990s try to figure out what to do with it. A significant help is "Giving Better, Giving Smarter: Renewing Philanthropy in America," a 120-page report of the National Commission on Philanthropy and Civic Renewal. It is available from the Lynde and Harry Bradley Foundation at P.O. Box 92848, Milwaukee, WI 53202. Of course, an excellent way of making sure that your intentions will be honored is a bequest to the Institute on Religion and Public Life, publisher of FT. If that sounds self-interested, it is also that, but the chief interest is in seeing that this enterprise flourishes long after we are gone to where we no longer see through a journal dimly.

■ I noted earlier this fine piece of research on college textbooks dealing with marriage and family. Sponsored by the Institute for American Values and directed by Norval Glenn of the University of Texas, the study documents that, with few exceptions, the textbooks focus on the negative—divorce, domestic violence, child abuse, and so forth. "Both by what they say and sometimes, even more importantly, by the information they omit these books repeatedly suggest that marriage is more a problem than a solution," says the report. Writing for the *New York Times*, Tamar Lewin notes that the sponsor of the study "is described as somewhere between centrist and conservative." In further explanation, there is this: "Some members, including Ray Marshall and William Galston, have strong Democratic ties, while others, including Judith Wallerstein and Barbara Dafoe Whitehead, are known solely for their writing on family policy." The implication would seem to be that excessive concern for family policy is conservative and therefore suspect. It appears that Ms. Lewin offers further confirmation of Prof. Glenn's findings.

■ *Antiphon* is the publication of the Society for Catholic Liturgy, a fine organization founded by Monsignor Francis Mannion. The current issue, however, seems to be stretching in order to distinguish the society from similar efforts of a more forthrightly conservative nature. In his editorial, Msgr. Mannion takes note of reflections by Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger in an autobiographical work that has not yet appeared in English. Mannion writes: "In the cardinal's view, the fundamental problem following Vatican II was that the reformed liturgy was 'presented as a new structure, in opposition to the one which had been formed through history.' The old structure was 'dismantled, and its pieces were used to construct another' to the detriment of liturgical tradition. This made it appear that liturgical development is not a 'vital process,' but a product of 'specialist knowledge and juridical competence.' The impression developed that 'the liturgy is "manufactured," that it is not something which preceded us, something "given," but that it depends on our decisions.' The cardinal concludes: 'For the life of the church, it is dramatically urgent to have a renewal of liturgical awareness, a liturgical reconciliation, which goes back to recognizing the unity in the history of the liturgy and understands Vatican II not as a break, but as a developing moment.'" Mannion juxtaposes Ratzinger's views with those of Archbishop Rembert Weakland of Milwaukee, who, in an article in *America*, staunchly defends the liturgical changes of recent decades and blames any confusions on Pope John Paul's indult of 1984, allowing the use of the Tridentine rite at the discretion of the bishop. "The one point of agreement between Cardinal Ratzinger and Archbishop Weakland," writes Mannion, "is that the liturgical life of the church today is in crisis. Beyond that, it would be difficult to reconcile their positions. The tendency to take sides is tempting but, in my opinion, it should be suspended. . . . The alternative is continued fruitless polarization and ecclesiastical tribalism." One can appreciate Msgr. Mannion's desire to position his society in the center, which is often taken to be the high ground, but his irenicism is a reach too far. Ratzinger is describing a liturgical circumstance that is pervasive and is overwhelmingly supported by the liturgical establishments that brought the circumstance about. Weakland uncritically endorses the status quo—which he calls "the product of the finest thinking within the whole of the Catholic tradition"—and heaps blame for any problems on John Paul II's pastoral generosity to a relatively small handful of Catholics who prefer the Tridentine rite. Mannion is right that the future should not mean going back to conditions before Vatican II, and Ratzinger is certainly not suggesting that. The point is that Ratzinger's argument about the sources of our current problems is substantive, while Weakland's complaint is, to put it kindly, superficial. Taking Ratzinger's "side" in his analysis of what has gone wrong still leaves plenty of room for honest disagreement about what should be done about it. The high ground in this discussion is not to be found mid-way between the substantive and the silly.

■ In speaking to pro-life gatherings, I have over the years referred to the *New York Times*' claim in January 1973 that the Supreme Court had "settled" the abortion question. I then follow that with the observation that twenty-five years later it remains the most unsettled question in our public life. Questioned about this, I asked Richard Doerflinger of the bishops' pro-life office to get the exact quote. On January 23, the day after the 7-2 *Roe v. Wade* decision, the *Times* story called the decision "an historic resolution of a fiercely controversial issue." The editorial the next day said: "The Court's verdict

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on abortions provides a sound foundation for final and reasonable resolution of a debate that has divided America too long. As with the division over Vietnam, the country will be healthier with that division ended." The word "settled" does not appear. I stand corrected. Twenty-five years later, abortion remains the most unresolved question in our public life.

■ The compassion that kills. Elisabeth Ohlenberg writes in *RN* (Registered Nurse) about the case of one she calls John Levine at the Veterans Hospital in Brooklyn, New York. At age seventy-three, a cerebral hemorrhage "left him in a persistent vegetative state (PVS)," she writes. At the family's request, food and hydration were withdrawn. "It took twenty days for Mr. Levine to die—an unusually long time." Despite being in PVS, "We would talk to him and sometimes he would smile. I'm almost sure he understood what we were saying. When you came near the bed his eyes would look at you as if he knew you were there." Presumably the nurses did not tell him they were killing him, although ever so caringly. Most of the article is about the emotional stress experienced by nurses, and it offers suggestions on how to handle that. The conclusion: "Clearly, caring for Mr. Levine required a lot from everyone involved. Although there were many bumps along the way, we're proud of the fact that we were able to provide compassionate and quality nursing care. We're also confident that we'll be able to meet whatever challenges future Mr. Levines may bring." No doubt.

■ A vibrantly orthodox Presbyterian, John H. Leith is professor of theology emeritus at Union Theology Seminary in Richmond and has recently published *Crisis in the Church: The Plight of Theological Education* (Westminster/John Knox). The notice in *Christian Century* is generally positive, but with caveats. "There is some nostalgia, some romanticism about irretrievable good old days, and perhaps more gloom than necessary about the mixed present." The reviewer does not say how much gloom is necessary.

■ "When Christians Fight Christians" is a generally thoughtful article by Tim Stafford in *Christianity Today*. His subtitle is "The Spirit unites, but the American church divides. A field guide for discerning how to handle Christian controversy." A prime case study, Stafford says, is "Evangelicals and Catholics Together" (ECT), the statement on convergence and cooperation between Catholics and evangelical Protestants that was issued in the spring of 1994 (FT, May 1994). ECT immediately came under attack from prominent evangelicals such as R. C. Sproul, John MacArthur, and D. James Kennedy, who claimed that the evangelicals had sold out the Reformation heritage. Stafford has sage advice on how controversies should be handled, and on the ways that personal fiefdoms in evangelicalism can encourage the propensity for conflict. He notes that the controversy "had little or no intersection with the institutional church. . . . Compare this with previous doctrinal disputes of American Christianity, fought in church councils and denominational publications. Church splits occurred regularly, but they led to the establishment of *new* churches and *new* denominations. Churches have members. Parachurch organizations have donors." For all the peace-seeking wisdom in Stafford's discussion, one cannot help but notice that references to "American Christians" and "the church" are limited exclusively to evangelical Protestants. While the intention is undoubtedly irenic, the underlying assumption betrays the sectarian habit of mind challenged by ECT, namely, that Catholics are not fellow Christians. The most vocal evangelical critics of ECT have been largely isolated, but old habits die hard. Perhaps it is fair to paraphrase Mr. Stafford: Churches have members. Parachurch magazines have subscribers.

■ One might think he would learn. Father Robert Drinan, S.J., last year wrote a column supporting President Clinton's veto of the bill banning partial-birth abortion. Later, prompted by ecclesiastical pressure, he issued a statement saying he did not understand the procedure and supported the Church's efforts to protect the unborn. Now he writes a column in the *National Catholic Reporter* puffing a book filled with apocalyptic warnings about the global "population explosion." Once again, Fr. Drinan apparently fails to understand. According to the latest UN estimates, population growth is dramatically slowing. The annual increase in world population peaked in 1985-90 at eighty-seven million, and has been dropping since. The annual increase is expected to be down to forty-one million in 2050. As Bishop James McHugh of Camden, New Jersey, points out, the book puffed by Fr. Drinan promotes population control by any means so long as they are "respectful of human freedom." Bishop McHugh observes, "Abortion clearly is not respectful of the freedom of the unborn, and recent reports from Sweden and Japan about government-promoted sterilization of people with disabilities was in fact coercive and dehumanizing." More pointedly, the bishop adds: "Fr. Drinan claims that Catholics are not supportive of efforts to promote family planning and are noticeably absent from groups trying to control 'overpopulation.' He laments the fact that Catholics are unaware of the continual decline in U.S. dollars for birth control programs in foreign nations. One might reasonably presume that Fr. Drinan does not understand the Church's teaching on responsible parenthood and its link to social development. That teaching was clearly set forth at Cairo, at the International

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Conference on Woman in Beijing (1995), and at the Summit on Social Development in Copenhagen (1996). It may even be that Father Drinan is unhappy with the Church's teaching on birth control. If so, he should be more forthright in saying so, rather than hiding behind a misrepresentation of the demographic data."

■ Concern about judicial usurpation doesn't preclude recognizing that judges can sometimes get it right. Trinity Western University of Langley, British Columbia, applied for accreditation of its teacher training program by the British Columbia College of Teachers (BCCT) so that its students would not have to take their last year at a secular university. (Trinity Western is sponsored by the Evangelical Free Church.) Apparently everything was in order until BCCT discovered that Trinity requires that its students abstain from premarital sex, adultery, and homosexual activity while enrolled as students. This, said BCCT, represents "discriminatory practices which are contrary to the public interest and public policy and [may lead] graduates to be biased against homosexual students in the classroom." Accreditation denied. Nonsense, answered BC Supreme Court Justice W. H. Davies, noting that "since large numbers of TWU graduates are teaching in the public school system, it would have been possible to determine if there had been any incidents of intolerance." There was no such evidence, Davies concluded, and he ordered BCCT to certify the school. BCCT has appealed the decision, and there things stand for the moment. Imagine, requiring students at a Christian university to behave like Christians. The price of tolerance doesn't come cheap.

■ As a young man, I was greatly affected by the writings of O. P. Kretzmann, a clergyman of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and long-time president of Valparaiso University, Indiana. The literary tone was always autumnal, with leaves falling and Bach's St. Matthew Passion accompanying his deep reflections, aided by a very dry martini. I was reminded of O. P. in reading the opening passage of a newly translated essay by Hans Urs von Balthasar, "The Fathers, the Scholastics, and Ourselves." He writes, in a fine translation by Father Ed Oakes: "We are living in a time when the images of gods and idols are crashing all about us. The spiritual and cultural traditions of vast regions of the West are increasingly being called into question; indeed, we can go even further and say they are being liquidated, quickly and relatively painlessly. Just as a tree in autumn drops its leaves without pain or regret, in order to gather once more new strength from within, to renew its powers in hibernal peace, so too the tree of culture is now being stripped of its leaves. Of course, in this, the late autumn of our times, the leaves lie thickly under our feet—and the books thickly in the bookstores; but we aren't deceived for a moment about that. This colorful yellow and red swarm of leaves is animated no longer by life but, if at all, only by the wind. A small regret might well be permitted us here, just as autumn is the time of the elegiac lyric, but who would want on that account to huddle up under the blankets of an eschatological pathos! We trust the powers of nature, her wise economy, and the laws of her renewal." The gist of this remarkable essay, however, is not a nostalgic looking back but the development of Christian thought and life according to the "laws of renewal." Balthasar has rendered the invaluable service of leading many contemporary Christians to a new appreciation of the early church fathers, but in this essay—more than in much of his writing—he makes unmistakably clear that there cannot be any simple "return to the fathers." The fathers were "the first time out" in Christianity's engagement with worldly philosophy, notably with Platonism, but scholasticism, especially Thomas, was necessary to bring Christian thought, through Aristotle, to a fuller understanding of the good of creation. Always keeping in mind, as many Thomists have not, that the understanding of nature is emphatically theological; the accent on creation is never at the expense of the Creator. Most surprising to some readers will be Balthasar's stress on why modernity is in continuity with the development of Christian thought—lifting up the particular, the individual, and, in a word, *history* as the locus of God's creating and redeeming work in Christ. It is altogether a remarkable essay and is to be found in the Summer 1997 issue of *Communio* (number 24). For the theologically interested, it is worth a trip to the library.

■ "Collective Spirituality Behind Youth Crowds for Pope?" asks the headline of a story in *Religion Watch*. We don't usually use the word "collective," but some Christians, the Apostle Paul included, do think Christianity is a corporate thing, as, for example, in "Church." The report is based on a sniffishly dismissive article in the *Tablet* (London) on how the Pope manages to attract crowds of hundreds of thousands and even millions all over the world. "The Pope believes in a powerful, visible, and obedient Church. The large assemblies of Catholics who congregate during his pastoral visits are the best expression of this muscular Christianity. . . . It is interesting to note that those who organize the youth days are the trusted 'Pope's legions': Opus Dei, the Focolare, Communione e Liberazione, charismatics, and the rest, while those who attend are often the vast mass of drifters, of semi-believers, those who seek the warmth and emotion of a mass meeting, whether it be Woodstock, a Billy Graham rally, or St. Peter's Square." In fact, events such as the recent world youth gathering in Paris are organized by the local church, but more interesting is the reassurance

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that properly liberal *Tablet* types would not be caught dead attending, never mind helping to organize, such gatherings of the great unwashed. "Charismatics and the rest" is a particularly nice touch. It has even been rumored that this pope has approved of eating with tax collectors and sinners. The more decorous Catholics of England cannot help but be nervous about what their Anglican friends will think of them.

■ Once again, the *New York Times* editorially criticizes Pope John Paul II for not apologizing for "the silence of Pope Pius XII" during the Nazi horror. This is an old story and I will not repeat what has been said here before about the *Times'* editorial praise of Pius XII during and after the war for speaking out on behalf of the victims of Nazism. Nor will I repeat the well known—except perhaps to the current editors of the *Times*—facts about his role in saving thousands of Jewish lives in Italy and about the hundreds of thousands of Jews rescued by Catholics throughout Europe. I mention the tedious little editorial dig only because it prompted Dimitri Cavalli of the Bronx to write us with an interesting suggestion. Since the *Times* is so big on apologies, he wonders whether it is not time for Mr. Sulzberger to return the Pulitzer Prize awarded for the systematic lying of its star reporter Walter Duranty, who denied Stalin's mass murders, and for an editorial apologizing to Ukrainians for the *Times'* cover-up of the politically contrived famine that took ten million or more lives. The question is not one of the silence of the *Times* but of its active prevarication, when accurate reporting might have prompted Western relief to the victims and discouraged the Soviet regime from continuing on its murderous course. Mr. Cavalli doesn't want to seem judgmental, but he can't help wondering. Perhaps he does not appreciate that, as Paul Hollander has explained so well, some mass murders are more "politically interesting" than others.

■ *Mother Jones* describes itself as a political investigative magazine, so the editor thought a word of explanation was in order when the December issue was devoted to, of all things, religion. Editor Jeffrey Klein protects his backside by reaffirming the conventional lefty orthodoxies, but he is worried that the right is getting all the political advantage from what appears to be a religious resurgence in the country. He concludes his reflection with this: "Nietzsche could not conceive the extent to which religion could be a source of human empowerment. And Marx did not recognize that our desire to connect with a transcendent power runs even deeper than our drive for economic satisfaction. Each of us seeks. How we honor each other's search will tell the tale of the next millennium." The cover of the special issue bears the subtitle, "Spirituality is the new religion," which is exactly right. Religious freedom is important, says Klein, because then "the freer we are to forge our own faiths." The issue of *Mother Jones* exemplifies the soulset of those whom our megachurch friends like to call "seekers." We wish our friends all the best in reaching these folk with the gospel of Christ, but in trying to do so it is good to remember that they understand themselves to be not so much seeking the truth as ultimately committed to the truth of seeking. The goal is not to find the truth but to forge a truth, or, as they say, to "connect." In sum, *Mother Jones'* spirituality is another religion, just as the cover says. Which, of course, is all the more reason for those who have found, and have been found, by the truth to try to reach out to the adherents of this not-so-new religion.

■ The metaphor of the "wall of separation" has been used incessantly, and often perniciously, in arguments about church-state relations. Of particular interest is an article by Daniel L. Dreisbach in the Summer 1997 issue of the *Journal of Church and State*, "'Sowing Useful Truths and Principles': The Danbury Baptists, Thomas Jefferson, and the 'Wall of Separation.'" Dreisbach, professor of law at American University, Washington, D.C., makes the case that Jefferson's "wall" was intended to separate state and nation in religious matters, not to separate the institutions of religion and all civil government. The conclusion is that, in discussions of church and state, the wall metaphor has long outlived its usefulness, except for those who want to separate the deepest convictions of the people from the conduct of our public life.

■ When Monsignor Ronald Knox published his translation of the New Testament in 1945, it received rave reviews. Of course that was long before the zillion translations that have succeeded it. Templegate Publishers of Springfield, Illinois, are now bringing it back into print, which was the occasion for looking again at an achievement that impressed me greatly many years ago, and that I have too much neglected. It is still very impressive indeed. For information on this handsome paperback, write the publishers at 302 E. Adams St., Box 5152, Springfield, IL 62705.

■ The titans clash. Jonathan Kwitny has written an interestingly awful book on Pope John Paul II, *Man of the Century*. Father Andrew Greeley trashed it in *Book World*, the review of the *Washington Post*. Kwitny publishes a long letter there protesting that he and Greeley have had very sharp personal disagreements, that Greeley was manifestly biased, and that his review is riddled with errors. Greeley responds defending his review but not denying the personal animosity to Kwitny. Finally, the editor of *Book World* writes, "I do see a potential conflict of interest in anyone's reviewing a book in which he

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[i.e., Greeley] is mentioned fifteen times and with whose author he has quarreled." She notes that Greeley did sign the standard reviewer contract that stipulates, "If you have had any contact, friendly or otherwise, with the author of this book . . . please let *Book World* know immediately." Apparently Fr. Greeley did not read the fine print. But then, some things are understood.

■ At least for most of us mere mortals, admitting that we're wrong is not easy. No, this item is not to commend my humility but that of the board of the National Association of Biology Teachers. Their October meeting had before it a "Statement on Teaching Evolution" that included this: "The diversity of life on earth is the outcome of evolution: an unsupervised, impersonal, and unpredictable and natural process of temporal descent from genetic modification that is affected by natural selection, chance, historical contingencies, and changing environments." Prof. Alvin Plantinga of Notre Dame and Prof. Huston Smith, emeritus of Syracuse University, wrote asking the board to drop the words "unsupervised" and "impersonal." After a ten-minute discussion, the board unanimously resolved not to do so. At dinner that evening, the board members got to discussing the question and the next day unanimously reversed themselves. It goes to show what giving a little thought to a matter can do. "We decided that we had construed a meaning we had not intended," said executive director Wayne W. Carley. "The statement was interpreted to mean we were saying there is no God. We did not mean to imply that. That's beyond the purview of science." There's a bit of grammatical confusion there about who intended the construing of whose implied interpretation, or whatever, but the point is clear enough. Professors Plantinga and Smith are pleased, as they should be. Now they might take on other aspects of the statement, such as the exclusion of alternative or complementary explanations for the diversity of life on earth.

■ Several years ago there was an enormous ruckus in New York City about introducing into the public schools books such as *Heather Has Two Mommies* and *Daddy's Roommate*. The effort was turned back, for the most part, in New York, but now these and other readers are being used in Seattle. Not surprisingly, some parents are unhappy and a few have withdrawn their children from the public schools. The school board is not entirely of one mind, and one member, Ellen Roe, has some sympathy for the protesting parents. "We have to present both sides of the story," she says. It was not that long ago that presenting both sides of the story meant pointing out that, however odd it may seem, some people think homosexuality is not a bad thing. Now it means pointing out that, however odd it undoubtedly is, some people think homosexuality is not a good thing. Yes, indeed, let's make sure both sides of the story are presented, so long as it doesn't interrupt the progress of the story line.

■ The nepotism is disturbing enough, but the real pity is the parasitic cabal scrambling for shards of the great public moment that was the civil rights movement under the leadership of Martin Luther King, Jr. The *New York Times* reports the election of Martin Luther King III as president of "that eminent civil rights group," the Southern Christian Leadership Conference. Hardly eminent any more, and not likely to become so again under the direction of the great man's thirty-nine-year-old son, whose chief distinction to date is to lose a county commissioner's race when it was found that he owed $201,000 in back taxes. He did have a moment when he was bold enough to suggest that there might be something wrong with homosexuality, but promptly apologized under pressure, calling his remarks "uninformed and insensitive." The claustrophobic world of a superannuated civil rights leadership is underscored by noting the other leading contenders for the job that went to Mr. King: Ralph David Abernathy III, son of the great man's second in command, who was, unlike some others of that company, a man without guile; Walter E. Fauntroy, who for more than thirty years has been dining out on his having marched in the 1960s; and Adam Clayton Powell IV, former New York City councilman and heir to the Harlem legend. It is all yesteryear. All feeding off the past. The visionary Mr. King says the great challenge for the future is restoring welfare entitlements and protecting affirmative action. It is all unspeakably sad.

■ The bad news, according to Associated Press, is that America's trade deficit with China widened by another ten billion dollars this past fall because of the flood of imported toys and Christmas decorations. The really bad news is that millions of Christians in China are persecuted for their faithfulness to Christ. China is very enthusiastic about Christianity elsewhere.

■ There is a strong student movement at Georgetown University—supported also by non-Catholic Christians, Jews, and Muslims—to have crucifixes put up in all the classrooms. They think a university "in the Jesuit tradition" should also say something about being Catholic, and the student newspaper, the *Hoya*, agrees. The administration is putting off a response until a new study, "Centered Pluralism," is completed. Jesuit faculty member Father Thomas Reese says the movement is a "tempest in a teapot." He also says, "It's rearranging chairs on the *Titanic*." Some people are born phrase makers. He does not explain the parallels between Georgetown and the *Titanic*, but it sounds as though there may be more grave problems than the lack of

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crosses on classroom walls. Fr. Reese does go on to say: "What we're trying to deal with at a Catholic university is how you intelligently have a dialogue from Christian tradition with a pluralistic culture and how you inspire students who come through this institution in a way that will help them live lives as Christians and make a difference in making the world a better place." And, he might have added, to be nice people who don't impose their values on others. The diatalk of dialogue goes on and on like that. It is said that Georgetown is very big on not imposing Catholic values. It will not even impose them on itself. That is possibly unfair.

■ It was no big deal according to the White House. The President gave a major speech at the Human Rights Campaign dinner. With 200,000 claimed members, it is the largest gay and lesbian organization in the world and contributed $1.2 million in the last election campaign. Until now, no President had ever addressed a homosexual advocacy group and the White House is usually eager to trumpet "breakthroughs" by this administration. Not this time. Press secretary Michael D. McCurry said, "The President has done literally dozens of community outreach events this year. He was just at the National Italian-American Foundation dinner last week." And you know how controversial is the lifestyle of those Italian Americans.

■ There was the vaulting presumption of "We Are the World" some years ago, an international rock concert raising consciousness about whales and the such. Then Catholics in Germany and Austria started "We Are Church," a petition drive to get the Church in tune with their presumably refined moral sensibilities about contraception, women priests, married clergy, democratic decision making, and so forth. I have never figured out the significance of the dropping of the definite article, but it is possibly part of the oceanic sensation of immersion in the All that is such a marked feature of current spiritualities. In any event, here in the U.S. "We Are Church" was going to get a million signatures (from sixty million Catholics) protesting the wicked patriarchy, but fell far, far short of that, even though its promoters resorted to bribing school children to get their parents and friends to sign. Now *Catholic Trends* reports that 2.5 million signatures, collected in twenty countries, have been presented to the Vatican. That represents about one in four hundred Catholics, if the signatures are authentic and if the signers are Catholic, neither of which is verified. Considering the effort put into the campaign and the favorable media attention, the outcome would seem to be a resounding vote of confidence in the Church's leadership. The signatures were received by a kindly low-level priest at the office of the Vatican Secretary of State. It is the pastorally responsible thing to meet with anybody, even with funny, albeit humorless, people who go around announcing, "We Are Church."

■ Once a year my inner onomastician is allowed out to comment on the names they're giving boys and girls these days. As it happens, things haven't changed much in the last thirty years. Gravitas for the boys and glitter for the girls. The top names for girls in New York City (which doesn't differ that much from the nation in this respect): Ashley, Jessica, Samantha, Stephanie, Nicole, Amanda, Jennifer, Sarah, Michelle, Emily. For boys: Michael, Christopher, Anthony, Kevin, Daniel, Joseph, Matthew, Justin, Jonathan, David. Solid citizens all, and mostly biblical. Kevin is number one for Asian boys, suggesting that Asians eager to assimilate think the Irish are the real Americans. Malik has this year replaced Michael as number one for black boys. (Malik means "angel" in Arabic.) A lot of girls are being named Randy, Kelly, Shannon, and Dana, all being traditionally male names—as, of course, are Ashley, Stephanie, and Michelle. Traditional female names do not transfer to the male column in the same way. It would seem that a boy with a girl's name is in deep trouble on the school playground, while there is a certain panache for a girl with a boy's name. Onomasticians say parents choose names because they are popular and then stop choosing them when they become too popular. Robert, John, and William were at the top until the 1950s, along with Mary for girls. Now none of them is even in the top ten, unless you count Jonathan for John. I know that readers wait breathlessly for this annual report on names. Year after year the conclusion is the same: to judge by name giving, it's still a boy's world. We do our bit to remedy this by reminding parents of girls that there is Sarah (which does make the list), Mary (in all its variations), Esther, Rebecca, Ruth, Faith, Hope, Charity, and a host of others. It is pleasant to think that, after all the media attention upon her death last September, there are now a lot of little Teresas out there. I fear, however, that there are many more Dianas.

■ *The Long Term View* is a journal published by the Massachusetts School of Law and the current issue is devoted to judicial misconduct. Among the authors is David J. Owsiany of the Federalist Society, who writes: "If the FIRST THINGS symposium shows anything, it is that if runaway federal courts continue to usurp authority from the political branches, reasonable people may question the legitimacy of the government. At the present stage, those questioning our government's legitimacy are relatively few, but if courts intrude into taxation, criminal justice, education, and employment, those numbers could grow. A national debate regarding the appropriate role of the judiciary must take place. The American public must know that the stakes are high. As James Madison wrote in *Federalist* 51, 'In the compound republic of America, the power

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surrendered by the people is first divided between two distinct governments (federal and state), and then the portion allotted to each subdivided among distinct and separate departments (separation of powers). Hence a double security arises to the rights of the people.' When a federal court strikes down a state law merely because it disagrees with the law's provisions, the court does more than just eliminate a statute. The court upsets the balance between federal and state powers, and crosses the boundaries of the separation of powers established in the Constitution. The consent of the people is lost."

■ The *Economist* ran a fittingly admiring obituary on Viktor Frankl which quoted "*First Things*, an American journal of philosophy." Kristen Haas of Grand Rapids, Michigan, dropped the editors a note pointing out that we are a journal of religion, to which she received the reply: "Dr. Frankl was reluctant to allow religion to creep into articles about him, so we respected his wishes." That religion creeps is interesting. That quoting a journal of philosophy rather than a journal of religion is thought more suited to the *Economist*'s upmarket self-image seems probable. Most fascinating, however, is the implication that the editors consulted Viktor Frankl about his obituary. Before he died, presumably. In fact, Dr. Frankl was quite prepared to speak about religion, as witness Matthew Scully's "Viktor Frankl at Ninety: An Interview" (FT, April 1995).

■ When concern for persecuted Christians around the world really began to build up steam, some of the more established human rights groups were thrown into a tizzy. They certainly didn't like being accused of having ignored the persecution of Christians in the past. Some responded initially by belittling the persecution. Bill Schulz, executive director of Amnesty International USA, says the reaction of some human rights leaders has been "defensive." He wants to make it clear to his constituency that "my credentials as a political and religious left-winger are pretty solid." And he does not fail to ask, with some justice, "Where, after all, has the evangelical community been for the past thirty years when it comes to human rights?" Having reassured his liberal friends that he's not switching sides, Schulz goes on to say, "I frankly welcome to the human rights struggle all those who genuinely care about human suffering, no matter what their views of God or the state. As I have said often, I think the public constituency for human rights in this country is shockingly small. The only way we will ever build it is by reaching out to those of all political and religious stripes (to say nothing of cultural and racial backgrounds) to enlist them in our cause. . . . No, it is not enough to be concerned about any one group, Christians or otherwise. And no, religious freedom cannot be separated from political freedom; we must care about it all. But blood flows red, regardless of your color, politics, or faith, and perhaps lamenting the treatment of your coreligionists overseas may motivate you to feel similarly about the plight of others. If human rights mean anything, they mean treating people as individuals and not stereotypes. The struggle for a civil world is not solely the prerogative of liberals. . . . So as we plunge into a new Amnesty year, let's welcome everyone who comes our way, and let's assume that they are (at least) as pure in heart as we." Purity of heart yet. It is a real challenge to have to live up to the standards of contemporary liberalism.

■ Some people persist in saying "Saint" Valentine's Day, so the school board in Hillsborough, New Jersey, changed it to Special Person Day. The children are still permitted to give cards, so long as there is no suggestion that they have a special person in mind. There must be a card for everyone in the class. As for Christmas ("December season"), gift giving is out, since the board "considered gift giving a religious activity." They may have a point there. From the potlatch to the magi, giving gifts is dangerously entangled with obligation, gratitude, and other sensibilities that, pushed far enough, inevitably raise the You Know Who question. And surely we must protect the greedy little tikes from that sort of thing.

■ It is true that students in journalism school rank near the bottom of the academic heap, but they have the perverse consolation of looking down at those in education. Item: the *Teachers College Record* of Columbia Teachers College. The lead article in this issue is by David C. Berliner of Arizona State University, "Educational Psychology Meets the Christian Right." The Christian Right does not come off at all well. Its members "are among the most unrelenting contemporary critics of public schools [and] some seek the destruction of public education." It seems that many seek to destroy the public schools by taking their children out of them. "They emphasize physical punishment, the breaking of children's will, and obedience to authority. Such theories cannot be supported by modern psychology." That sounds bad enough but it is not the worst of it. "Furthermore, these child-rearing practices are totally incompatible with the constructivist models of learning that form the basis for educational reforms." And we all know what a great success those models have been. "The antagonism of the Christian Right to these programs is based on a fear of losing control over their children's thinking, rather than any compelling empirical data." There you have it, uppity parents challenging the experts for control over their children's thinking. The conclusion of the article is that "many among the Christian Right are unable to engage in politics that make a common school

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possible. They may be unable to compromise and live with educational decisions reflecting a pluralistic democracy keeping separate church and state." Oh dear. But if that's the case, maybe it's better for everyone that they not have their children in the public schools. Perhaps that's the point Prof. Berliner is making, but I don't think so. He seems to hope that those millions of parents will simply disappear, or maybe he has some unnamed plan for getting rid of them. But no, he indicates that we'll have to put up with them, at least for a while. "It is one of the great paradoxes of democracy that in the interest of pluralism we must tolerate a group out to destroy a public institution dedicated to the preservation of pluralism," he writes. On the contrary, it is not a paradox but a paradigm of democracy that people exercise their democratic freedoms in ways with which we disagree. Be that as it may, those Christians who presume to take responsibility for their children's thinking have been given fair notice that the tolerance of Prof. Berliner and Columbia Teachers College is wearing thin.

■ *We will be pleased to send a sample issue of this journal to people whom you think are likely subscibers. Please send names and addresses to* FIRST THINGS, *156 Fifth Avenue, Suite 400, New York, NY 10010.*

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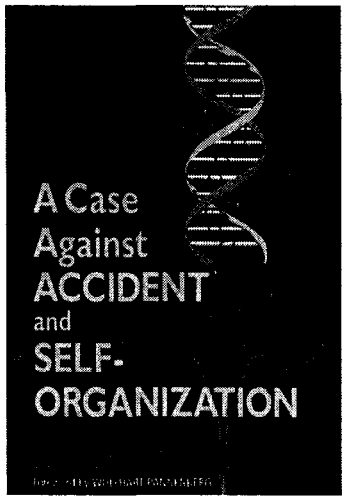

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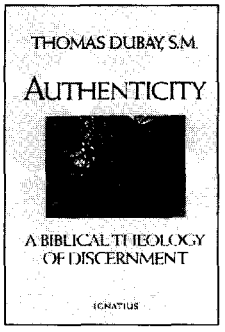

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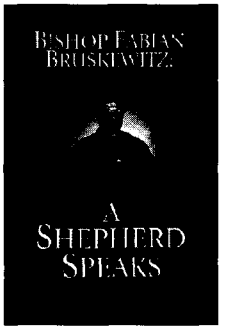

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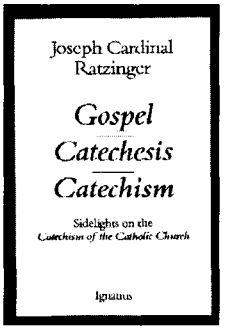

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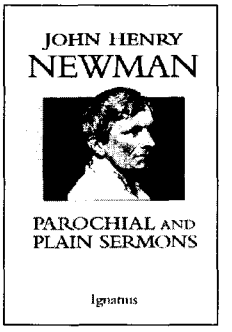

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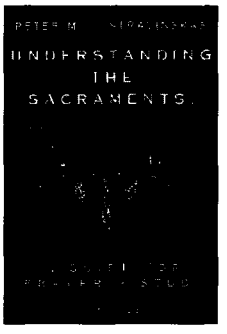

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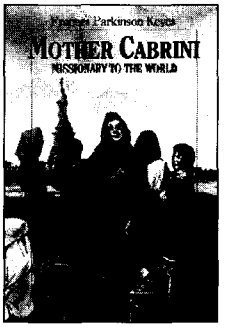

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